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ABSTRACT

Concern at an elementary school that the level of successful first grade readiness for high risk kindergarten children was 62 percent, while the level of success for non-risk kindergartners was 100 percent, prompted a program for improving the readiness skills of high-risk kindergarten students described in this report. Chapter one describes Stout Elementary School in Sellersburg, Indiana, a school composed of kindergarten through sixth grade, and presents a rationale for making a concentrated effort to reduce school failure at all levels, beginning with high risk students in early childhood education. Chapter two outlines four probable reasons for high risk kindergartners' poor success in the Stout Elementary Kindergarten program: (1) lack of instructional time, (2) poor attendance, (3) lack of time for individual instruction and assistance, and (4) being young at school entry in relation to peers. This chapter also presents methods of identifying high risk students, and describes prior activity to assist these students. Chapter three identifies five terminal objectives for a successful program, and Chapter four presents a background for the study. Chapter five describes implementation of "Project Earlybird," including the use of tutors to increase instructional time, telephone checks to monitor attendance, and summer school to lengthen the instructional year. Chapter six presents results indicating that the success rate for high risk kindergarteners increased from 62 percent to 75 percent. Chapter 7 deals with the reasons for the decision to continue "Project Earlybird." Twenty-one tables of data are included and 23 references are attached. (NH)

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IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

by

David E. Losey *

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
the National Ed.D. Program for
Educational Leaders

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Individual I Practicum Report
Indiana Cluster
Submitted: November, 1986

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CS005042

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Abstract

AUTHOR: David E. Losey
DATE: November, 1986
CLUSTER: Indiana
PRACTICUM: Individual I

TITLE: Improving the First Grade Readiness Skills of High Risk Kindergarten Students

ABSTRACT: This report describes a program for improving the readiness skills of high risk kindergartners. Informal teacher observation and two screening tests determined the degree of failure risk for each kindergartner. Problems noted among high risk kindergartners were low scores on achievement tests and a lack of success in grade one. Subsequently, high risk students were often retained in kindergarten or inappropriately placed in grade one. The level of successful first grade readiness for high risk kindergartners was 62 percent; while the level of success for non-risk kindergartners was 100 percent.

Analysis of problem symptoms revealed that high risk students suffered from a lack of instruction time and a lack of individual instruction. Further analysis indicated that a high absence rate was detrimental to achievement. Being young at school entry was the final probable cause. A corrective program used tutors to increase the amount of instructional time and the amount of individual assistance. Volunteer adults and grade six students tutored the kindergartners. Telephone checks were used to monitor attendance. Summer school was implemented to lengthen the kindergarten year.

Symptoms of the problem were reduced as anticipated; the success rate of high risk kindergartners increased from 62 percent to 75 percent. Achievement scores increased in the areas of reading, language, and mathematics. However, the attendance of high risk kindergartners did not improve. Side effects noted were improved self concept by kindergartners and by grade six student tutors. Additional side effects were improved sense of professionalism for the kindergarten teachers and improved public relations for the school.

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Chapter 1

STOUT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE SELLERSBURG COMMUNITY

The Sellersburg Community

Are some kindergarten students destined to be unsuccessful in gaining first grade readiness skills? Can elementary school resources be orchestrated to promote success for high risk kindergartners? These important questions were addressed by the staff at Stout Elementary School. Stout Elementary is located in the small town of Sellersburg, Indiana. Sellersburg is located in the center of the West Clark Community Schools system, one of three school systems in Clark County. The southern border of the county is the Ohio River. Clark County is included in the metropolitan area of Louisville (KY).

Sellersburg has a population of five thousand. There is little local industry, only two factories employ more than 20 workers. Major shopping and recreation activities are available outside of the town. The Falls City area of Jeffersonville (IN), Clarksville (IN), New Albany (IN), and Louisville (KY) becomes the activity center for the town residents. Sellersburg could aptly be described as a "bedroom" community.

The socio-economic status of the majoriy of residents would be described as middle class. There is little

migration into the community because of the Mid-West's depressed economic conditions. Traditional values are perpetuated in the community. The stability of population and community beliefs results in value being placed on quality education. Residents equate quality education with community involvement in the school, therefore, the school becomes the focal point of many community events.

Stout Elementary School

The writer is principal of Stout Elementary School which has an enrollment of 500 students. Stout is the host school for kindergarten and first grade in both the Stout and Sellersburg Elementary School attendance districts. This arrangement results in larger enrollments at these grade levels.

Stout is the largest of six elementary schools in the West Clark system. There are also four secondary schools in West Clark. The school corporation was formed as a result of state mandate in 1968 from five small trustee controlled systems. Three high schools, with enrollments from 318 to 605 students, remain within the township boundaries.

The student body at Stout Elementary School is homogeneous. There are no minority students enrolled at Stout. Although the students make use of the resources available in the larger neighboring cities, they remain

detached from many metropolitan influences. The students maintain zealous pride in the town and their school.

Stout Elementary School is composed of kindergarten through sixth grades. The classrooms are all self-contained with one teacher responsible for all academic instruction. The faculty is composed of 25 classroom teachers. There are special teachers for music, art, and physical education. The faculty is experienced with 88 percent holding a master's degree and 75 percent having tenure. There is a well equipped library/media center with full time aide on site. A computer laboratory is available for use by all students.

Stout has the largest enrollment of special education students of any West Clark school. Under certain conditions students from every other elementary attendance district attend Stout for special education. Special education classes for speech therapy, learning disabled, mildly mentally handicapped, and seriously emotionally disturbed are housed at Stout. The school is a member of Clark County Special Education Cooperative. The cooperative is formed by the three Clark County school systems and is responsible for receiving referrals, completing evaluations, and recommending placements in special education.

The National Concern for High Risk Children

The interest in improving the education of children by improving the schools is nationwide. Studies on reforming schools began in November 1982 with *The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto* (Passow, 1984). The report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk* (1983), has become fuel for the political fire of the school reform movement. The 1985 Nova University Summer Institute of the National Ed.D. Program for Educational Leaders included a theme of implementing school reform with "Excellence, Equity, and Diversity in Education."

President Reagan, as the nation's most visible and trusted leader, has become personally involved with the excellence in schools movement. He has furthered the call for excellence in schools by writing (Reagan, 1984:13),

> On 22 May 1984 I signed a Presidential proclamation naming 1984-85 the Year of Excellence in Education. The purpose of the proclamation was to encourage parents, teachers, administrators, and government officials to observe this year with activities aimed at restoring the preeminence of America's educational system among the nations of the world.

Passow (1984) reported that recent reports and studies focused on the high school. There has been little attention to early childhood and elementary education. Passow (1984:681) further stated that "most of the (report) recommendations are weakened by their failure to attend to

the entire spectrum of education."

One noteable exception to the focus on secondary education was *Barriers to Excellence: Our Children at Risk*. The report was based on recent research and information gathered at hearings of the National Board of Inquiry into Schools commissioned by the National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS). The board was charged to investigate the status of children of greatest need in public schools. The recommendations of the board covered early childhood education by recommending establishment of comprehensive early childhood education as a means of preventing school failure (Cardenas, et al, 1985). *Barriers to Excellence* stated,

> We seek:
> To recognize the usefulness and cost effectiveness of high quality early childhood education and child care programs as a means of preventing school failure.
> To respond to the needs of an increasing number of young people whose chances of remaining in school would be increased if they had help with serious personal and social problems (Cardenas and First, 1985:8).

The national concern for excellence and equity in education is a opportunity for all educators to lead efforts to improve schools. The professional in early childhood education must be involved in and committed to attaining both excellence and equity with a diverse student population. A concentrated effort to reduce school failure at all levels can effectively begin with high risk students in early childhood education. Howe of the National Board

of Inquiry into Schools, as cited by Cardenas and First (1985:7) reported:

> The "children at risk" that we identify are growing in number and proportion in our schools. For economic and humanitarian reasons, we need to make them successful. They require the same quality education that several other national studies have called for, but the road for them is longer and harder. They need a combination of encouragement and special help that this nation, by reordering its priorities, can easily afford.

Chapter 2

HIGH RISK KINDERGARTNERS LACK SUCCESS AT STOUT ELEMENTARY

Preliminary Information Illustrated the Problem of High Risk Kindergartners

The belief that the educational needs of high risk kindergarten students were not being adequately met was held by the writer since 1980 when the writer began serving as principal of the school. Several indicators nurtured this initial belief into a major concern.

Prior to 1980, the writer served as principal of an elementary school containing grade one through grade eight. Since the writer had not been involved with administration of kindergarten, the writer made special effort to become familiar with the kindergarten at Stout Elementary School. Understanding and effectively managing the kindergarten program was important because 24 percent of the student body in the K-6 school was enrolled in kindergarten. Not only were students in the Stout district enrolled, but students in the Sellersburg Elementary School district attended the Stout program.

The writer made classroom observations, conducted teacher conferences, reviewed the curriculum, and held parent discussion sessions. The writer also completed a university course in early childhood education in order to

better understand kindergarten education. The writer, based upon the previous activities, made an informal initial interpretation of the strengths and weaknesses of the kindergarten at Stout Elementary.

The writer found that the most important strength in the kindergarten program was the teachers. The professionals teaching in the kindergarten program were evaluated by the principal to be excellent educators. The teachers were veterans, who held master degrees with endorsements in kindergarten and had several years experience in kindergarten. Conversely, the writer found that the greatest weakness in the kindergarten program was the lack of systematic effort to provide assistance to high risk students.

Prior to 1982, there was no planned effort to share information between school and parents regarding the readiness of incoming kindergartners. The first communication was at the end of the sixth week of school. Parents received a written report of kindergarten progress at that time. If parents had questions about the report, parents requested a conference with the kindergarten teacher.

During 1983 through 1985, the retention rate for kindergarten was 5.3 percent, while the retention rate for grades one through six was 2.1 percent. The high risk kindergarten students who were unsuccessful in gaining

first grade readiness followed an educational path of retention in kindergarten or inappropriate placement in first grade. If the teacher and principal believed the student faced certain failure in first grade, the student was recommended for retention. However, school corporation policy prohibited retention of kindergartners if parents did not agree with the retention. The number of kindergartners entering grade one due to parental demand prohibiting retention averaged 20 percent of all kindergarten retention recommendations. If retention was not made, the student entered grade one lacking readiness skills and was relegated to "low" reading and math groups.

Informal indicators supported the writer's preliminary belief that the educational needs of high risk kindergarten students were not being adequately met. Informal assessment indicated students were entering kindergarten at risk for failure. The knowledge that the students were at risk was not formally communicated to parents. The lack of readiness skills was not effectively remediated. Therefore, the writer believed that the students were not provided the best opportunity for success in first grade. A further review of detailed documentation on the 1984-1985 Stout Elementary Kindergarten supported the preliminary indication that a problem with high risk kindergartners existed.

Identification of High Risk Kindergartners in 1984/85

Stout kindergarten teachers contended that kindergartners at risk for failure could be informally indentified by observation of class activities during the first two weeks of school. Immature characteristics included a lack of five year old developmental skills, such as knowledge of colors, shapes, position in space, numbers, and letters. The teachers further noted that high risk students have the ability to listen and remain on task for only short periods of time.

In addition to informal teacher assessment, the writer supervised implementation of planned improvements in the formal assessment of high risk kindergarten students. In the spring of 1982, the Stout Elementary Preschool Screening Test (SEPST) was given to students registering to attend kindergarten in the fall (Appendix A:107). In 1984, the *Riley Preschool Developmental Screening Inventory* (RPDSI) (Riley, 1969) was given to kindergartners who missed the screening test at spring registration. Each new assessment procedure was added to those already being used. These assessment measures were continued on an annual basis.

The resulting assessment timetable included three opportunities to measure kindergarten readiness. These assessments identified high risk kindergartners, that is, kindergartners at risk to fail during the upcoming

kindergarten school year. Accordingly, the high risk assessment opportunities were teacher observation, the SEPST, and the RPDSI (Table 1:11). These three opportunities were pretests for kindergarten.

Table 1

Assessment Timetable for Determining High Risk Kindergartners

When	Who	What	Why
April Before Kindergarten	All Students Registering	SEPST	Measure Kindergarten Readiness- High Risk
August Start Kindergarten	Those Missing April Screen	RPDSI	Measure Kindergarten Readiness- High Risk
August Start Kindergarten	All Students Kindergarten	Teacher Observe	Measure Kindergarten Readiness- High Risk

The degree of risk, for successfully gaining first grade readiness skills during the kindergarten year, was assessed for each registering kindergartner at two of the three assessment opportunities. Incoming kindergartners completed either the SEPST or the RPDSI. All incoming kindergartners were informally assessed by the kindergarten teachers.

Students registering for school in April completed the SEPST prior to the August start of school (Table 1:11).

Students who missed April registration were given the RPDSI (Table 1:11). The RPDSI, which took less time to administer than the SEPST, was used at August registration, where little time was available for readiness screening. As previously noted, during the first two weeks of kindergarten, all students were assessed for risk by informal observation of the kindergarten teachers (Table 1:11). Students were classified as high risk by falling into the "at risk" area on either screening test or by recommendation of the kindergarten teacher.

At the start of the 1984-85 school year, 37 kindergarten students were judged to be at high risk for failing to successfully gain readiness skills during kindergarten. The total kindergarten enrollment was 110 students. The fact that 34 percent of the students were entering kindergarten at high risk made successfully meeting the needs of the high risk students a serious problem (Table 2:13).

Table 2

1984-1985 High Risk Kindergartners Determined
By Each Assessment Method

Catagory	SEPST	RPDSI	Teacher Observation	Total
High Risk	24	5	8	37
Non Risk	67	14	--	73

High risk (37) / Total Students (110) = 34% High Risk

The Stout Kindergarten Program in 1984/85

Kindergarten at Stout Elementary was a half-day program, with each class scheduled to meet for three hours. However, the instructional time was far below 180 minutes. During the 1984-1985 school year, the amount of instructional time averaged 90 minutes in each kindergarten class (Table 3:14).

Table 3

Amount of Daily Instruction in Kindergarten

Type of Activity	Amount of Time
Attendance - Opening Activity	15 minutes
Milk and Snack Break	20 minutes
Prepare for Dismissal	10 minutes
Art, Music or Physical Education	30 minutes
Free Play	15 minutes
Instruction	90 minutes

During 1984-1985, the daily absence rate of all kindergarten students was 6.8 days, yet the rate for high risk students was 8.8 days (Table 4:15). The author examined attendance records from the previous year to confirm the attendance problem of high risk kindergartners. A review of 1983-1984 attendance record showed that the daily absence rate of all kindergarten students was 7.1 days. The students ranking as high risk on the 1983-1984 Stout Preschool Screening Test had a mean daily absence rate of 9.4 days. Even more alarming than the difference of two days in the mean daily absence rate, was the fact that in 1984-1985 ten of the high risk students were absent ten or more days (Table 5:15).

Table 4

Kindergarten Mean Daily Absence Rate

School Year	All Kdg	High Risk	Non-Risk
1984-1985	6.8 days	8.8 days	6.6 days
1983-1984	7.1 days	9.4 days	6.8 days

Table 5

1984-1985 High Risk Kindergartner Days Absent

Student	Days Absent	Student	Days Absent	Student	Days Absent
A01	1	A11	6	A21	7
A02	2	A12	3	A22	9
A03	8	A13	6	A23	2
A04	10	A14	6	A24	2
A05	3	A15	15	A25	15
A06	5	A16	NA	A26	10
A07	10	A17	2	A27	8
A08	31	A18	7	A28	0
A09	14	A19	26	A29	5
A10	31	A20	12	A30	5
				A31	2

The vast majority of instruction in the kindergarten program took place in a group setting. Often, the "group" was the total class. The kindergarten classes at Stout ranged from 20 to 25 students.

It should be noted that high risk students had a difficult time coping with the large group setting. The kindergarten teachers advised the writer that high risk students needed more time in one-to-one instruction and in small group activities. The writer interviewed each of the three kindergarten teachers about the manner in which individual instruction was provided to students. All teachers reported that one-to-one help was given in bits and pieces during the day. The teachers reported that the average amount of individual help a high risk student received was 15 minutes a week.

During 1984-1985, the mean age at school entry of high risk students was 62.5 months, while the mean age of all kindergartners and non-risk kindergartners was 63.6 months and 64.2 months respectfully (Table 6:17). The 1983-1984 school year showed mean ages at school entry of 64.1 months for all kindergartners. In the same year, those scoring as high risk on the Stout Pre-school Screening Test had a mean age of 61.8 months. While the non-risk student mean age was 64.8 months (see Table 6:17).

Table 6

Kindergarten Mean Age at School Entry

School Year	All Kdg	High Risk	Non-Risk
1983-1984	64.1 months	61.8 months	64.8 months
1984-1985	63.6 months	62.5 months	64.2 months

All kindergartners completed the *Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills* (CTBS) (McGraw-Hill, 1981) in April, 1984. The CTBS yielded national percentile scores in reading, language, and mathematics. Scores on the CTBS documented that high risk students fell short of non-risk kindergarten students in the academic areas.

When comparing CTBS scores, the mean national percentile for the three groups of students was used. In the area of reading, the mean score for all kindergarten students was percentile 61, for high risk students was percentile 39, and for non-risk students was percentile 69. In the area of language, the mean score for all kindergarten students was percentile 63, for high risk students was percentile 44, and for non-risk students was percentile 72. In the area of mathematics, the mean score for all kindergarten students was percentile 69, for high risk students was percentile 43, and for non-risk students

was percentile 81 (Table 7:18). The discrepancy in CTBS scores between the risk groups further illustrated the problem of high risk kindergarten students.

Table 7

1984-1985 Kindergarten CTBS Mean Scores

Student Group	Reading Nat'l Percentile	Language Nat'l Percentile	Math Nat'l Percentile
All Kindergarten	61 %ile	63 %ile	69 %ile
High Risk	39 %ile	44 %ile	43 %ile
Non-Risk	69 %ile	72 %ile	81 %ile

Identification of Kindergartners Successfully Gaining First Grade Readiness Skills in 1984-1985

At the close of the 1984-1985 school year, the success of kindergarten students in gaining first grade readiness skills was formally assessed with the *First Grade Readiness Test* (FGRT). This assessment was a posttest of the kindergarten program. The FGRT was administered during the second week of the promoted kindergartners' first grade year.

It should be noted that some students were judged unsuccessful in gaining readiness skills before the FGRT

was completed (Table 8:20). When students withdrew from the kindergarten program and returned home, the students were unsuccesful. The students' developmental skills were at a level where withdrawing from kindergarten until the next year was a logical decision. At this point, withdrawal from kindergarten was recommended to the parents, and final decision concerning withdrawal rested with the parents. Six students from the 110 student class withdrew from kindergarten during 1984-1985 (Table 9:21).

Students were also retained in or returned to kindergarten for a second year. The students did not take the FGRT, but fell in the not ready for first grade catagory. Five students from the 110 student class were retained in kindergarten during 1984-1985 (Table 9:21).

The majority of students completed the kindergarten year and started the next year in first grade. As previously stated, the posttest for these students was the FGRT. Three students from the original 110 student class "failed" the FGRT (Table 10:21). These students received recommendations to return to kindergarten. As previously stated, parents could overrule retention in kindergarten. Consequently, due to parental objection to retention, the three students "failing" the FGRT remained in first grade.

Table 8

Flow Chart for Determining Success in Kindergarten

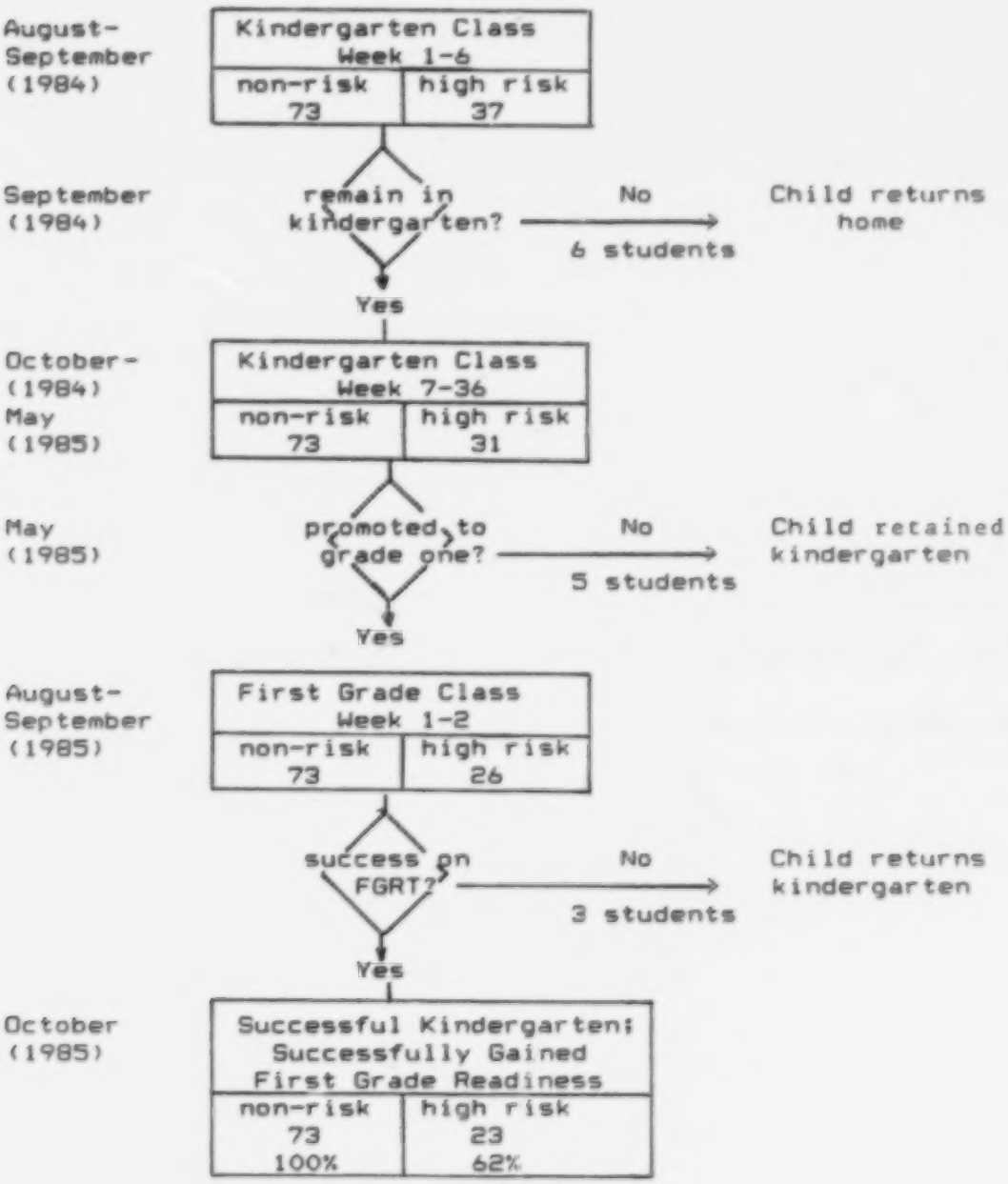

Table 9

1984-1985 Kindergartners Withdrawn or Retained

Student	Withdrawn From Kindergarten	Retained In Kindergarten	Disposition
A09	No	Yes	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A14	No	Yes	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A15	No	Yes	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A25	No	Yes	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A27	No	Yes	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A32	Yes	N/A	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A33	Yes	N/A	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A34	Yes	N/A	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A35	Yes	N/A	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A36	Yes	N/A	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A37	Yes	N/A	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
	6 Students	5 Students	

Table 10

1984-1985 Kindergartners Unsuccessful on FGRT

Student	Completed Kindergarten	FGRT %ile	Disposition
A01	Yes	15	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A23	Yes	15	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness
A26	Yes	17	Lacks Gr 1 Readiness

When withdrawals (6), retentions (5), and unacceptable scores on the FGRT (3) were added, the total number of students not successful in gaining first grade readiness skills was determined. At the close of the 1984-85 school year (September 1985), 14 students were not ready for grade one. This number of 14 students was used to compare the success of all kindergartners, of high risk kindergartners, and of non-risk kindergartners. Eighty-seven percent of all kindergarten students, 62 percent of high risk kindergarten students, and 100 percent of non-risk students were ready for grade one (Table 11:22). These figures dramatically illustrated that the needs of the high risk kindergarten student were not being met at Stout Elementary School.

Table 11

1984-1985 Kindergarten Success in First Grade Readiness

Student Group	Number Students in the Group	Number Students Successful	Percent Successful
All Kindergarten	110	96	87%
High Risk	37	23	62%
Non-Risk	73	73	100%

Prior Activity to Assist High Risk Kinergartners

Beginning in 1980, the principal and kindergarten teachers implemented changes in the kindergarten program. These changes were designed to improve the education of all kindergarten students with special emphasis on helping the high risk student. In some cases, the school corporation adopted the new techniques started in the Stout Elementary kindergarten for use in all elementary schools. In other instances, the planned change was never begun or stopped shortly after implementation.

During the spring of 1982 in preparation for the 1982-1983 school year, the principal and teachers designed and successfully implemented a screening procedure for incoming kindergarten students. In earlier procedures, parents with kindergarten students registered their children during the spring. Parents completed address information, presented a birth certificate of the student, and documented the immunizations of the student. The child was not asked to come with the parent during the registration.

In the new procedures, both the parent and the child participated in registration/screening. The prekindergarten student completed a series of activities that indicated conceptual and developmental skills. The parents answered questions that gave the school a better understanding of the parents' expectations for the student

(Appendix A:109). Each student and parent held a short conference with a kindergarten teacher and with the principal. These conferences, during the registration/screening procedure, communicated expectations of the school and answered concerns of the parents. During the spring of 1983, the registration/screening procedure designed and implemented at Stout Elementary a year earlier was successfully used throughout the local school corporation.

The results of the screening procedure alerted the staff and principal to the plight of the high risk kindergarten student. The first systematic effort to improve the success of these students was planned for 1982-1983. Five kindergarten classes were anticipated for this school year. The screening results from the spring of 1982 showed that 16 students were in the high risk area. The decision was made to place these 16 students in one of the five classes as a transition kindergarten class. Plans for implementing the transition class were completed. However, the class never began because there were not five classes as anticipated but only four classes. The 16 high risk students were divided between the four class. The plan for a transition kindergarten class was indefinately shelved.

Another plan of attack has been for the writer and early education teachers to increase parent awareness of

developmental age and of kindergarten curriculum. The accepted belief within the school community has been that a "five year old is a five year old". Many parents believed that any child who is five years old should be in kindergarten because kindergarten was only "play time". Parent conferences and written informaton communicated that five year old children have varying degrees of developmental skills. The principal presented information concerning developmental age and early childhood curriculum at home-school meetings. The goal of increasing parent awareness of these areas was to increase the number of developmentally young children who wait a year before entering kindergarten (Appendix B:110). Increasing parental awareness succeeded in having developmentally young children remain home even though they were chronologically five years old.

Stout Elementary School's effort to help high risk kindergartners was important locally, and efforts for high risk kindergartners also had national significance. The National Coalition of Advocates for Students called for improving early childhood education as a means of preventing school failure (Cardenas, et al, 1985). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching also challenged early childhood educators. A two-year project by the Carnegie Foundation focused on four- to eight-year old children. Boyer, reporting for the

foundation, as cited by Bridgman (1985:10) stated, "In our search for excellence in the schools, the early years are transcendentally important." Bridgman continued the citation of Boyer with

> During kindergarten and elementary school a solid educational foundation must be laid. If students are educationally successful in the early years, their prospects are enormously enhanced. If they fail, it will be almost impossible to fully overcome the problem later on.

The national significance and the needs of local high risk children were too important to ignore. The problem was not solved by prior activites; new effort was required.

Causes of Ineffectiveness in the Stout Kindergarten

A review of research conducted across the nation listed several probable causes for failure of high risk students to meet success in school (*Wood, Powell and Knight, 1984; Cardenas and First, 1985; Hetrick, 1983*). Understanding the national problem of high risk students was important, but understanding the specific causes of the local problem was the primary concern. The principal found four probable causes of high risk kindergartners not meeting success in the Stout Elementary kindergarten program. The probable causes were lack of instructional time, poor attendance, lack of time for one-to-one instruction, and being young in relation to peers.

The first probable cause was lack of instructional time. The amount of instructional time averages 90 minutes in each kindergarten class (Table 3:14). Research cited by Herman (1984) indicated that the flow of the kindergarten curriculum benefited from more instructional time during the school day. Herman further reported that children receiving more instructional time have significantly higher reading readiness scores at the end of their kindergarten year.

The second probable cause of high risk kindergartners not achieving success in kindergarten was poor attendance. The daily absence rate of high risk kindergartners was two days higher than non-risk kindergartners (Table 4:15). Ten of the 37 high risk students were absent ten or more days (Table 5:15).

The third probable cause of high risk kindergarten students not achieving grade one readiness at Stout Elementary was lack of time spent in one-to-one instruction. The majority of instruction in the kindergarten program takes place in a total class setting. A high risk student received 15 minutes of individual instruction each week.

Research (Hetrick, 1983) found instruction techniques, such as the group instruction in use at Stout, often did not match the needs of high risk kindergarten students. Hetrick (1983:15) reported that high risk kindergartners

"appeared confused over typical instructional terminology such as 'word' or 'letter'." The Stout kindergarten teachers reported "it is hard to squeeze in the time" to identify and to help students who are confused during the group instruction.

Uphoff and Gilmore (1985) presented the fourth probable cause applicable to the problem at Stout Elementary. This probable cause was entering school before being developmentally ready to cope with school. The authors (Uphoff and Gilmore, 1985) summarized research on early school entrance by noting five trends. First, older children in a grade received more above-average grades. Second, older children more often scored in the above-average range in standardized achievement tests. Third, younger children were more likely to have failed a grade. Fourth, younger children were far more likely to be referred for learning disabilities testing. Fifth, younger children often had academic problems lasting throughout the school years.

The high risk student at Stout was on the average younger than the mean kindergarten age. During 1984-1985, the mean age of high risk kindergartners was two months less than non-risk kindergartners (Table 6:17). The young high risk student faced the problems documented by Uphoff and Gilmore (1985).

In summary, the probable causes for the lack of success in gaining first grade readiness skills by the high risk kindergarten student at Stout Elementary were lack of instructional time, poor attendance, lack of time for individual instruction and assistance, and being young at school entry in relation to peers.

Chapter 3

DEFINING SUCCESS FOR HIGH RISK KINDERGARTNERS

Five terminal objectives were identified for the practicum project.

Objective one: As a result of implementing programs of volunteer tutoring, summer school remediation, and telephone checks for absent students during November 1985 to October 1986 the number of high risk kindergarten students attaining successful first grade readiness will increase from the 1984-85 level of 62 percent to 75 percent as measured by the FGRT and teacher recommendations.

Objective two: As a result of implementing a program of volunteer tutoring during November 1985 to April 1986 the mean score of high risk kindergarten students in the area of reading will increase from the 1984-85 level of percentile 39 to percentile 50 as measured by the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills.

Objective three: As a result of implementing a program of volunteer tutoring during November 1985 to April 1986

the mean score of high risk kindergarten students in the area of language will increase from the 1984-85 level of percentile 44 to percentile 55 as measured by the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills.

Objective four: As a result of implementing a program of volunteer tutoring during November 1985 to April 1986 the mean score of high risk kindergarten students in the area of mathematics will increase from the 1984-85 level of percentile 44 to percentile 55 as measured by the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills.

Objective five: As a result of implementing a program of telephone checks for absent students during November 1985 to May 1986 the average daily absence rate of high risk kindergarten students will decrease from the 1984-85 level of 29 percent above the mean absence rate to 15 percent above the mean as measured by charting student attendance records.

In interpreting objective one, it should be noted that the *First Grade Screening Test* by Pate and Webb (1969) was used. A score above national percentile 25 (raw score 18) on the screening test was considered to be success. Objective two, objective three, and objective four were

interpreted through the *Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) (McGraw-Hill)*. Form U at level B of the CTBS was administered during April. Objective five compared the daily absence rate against the mean daily absence rate of all kindergarten students.

Chapter 4

KINDERGARTEN AND THE HIGH RISK STUDENT

High Risk Kindergartners in the National Setting

The proper age for starting school was reviewed in available national research. Argument was made for allowing a child to start school whenever one is able to learn what the school has to teach. The claim was continued by pointing out that just as a child walks when ready, so should one start kindergarten or first grade when ready (Parsons, 1985). In contrast to this claim, Moore (1985) cited Dewey who said, "age eight is early enough for anything more than an incidental attention to visual and written language form." Moore (1985) further explained that a Standford team found no state in which early school entrance requirements were based on replicable research. Moore (1985) pleaded against early school entrance by listing that home-schooling causes children to average 30 percent above the national mean on standardized tests. Swartz and Black (1981) found that learning disabled children had a normal distribution of birthdates for school entrance, except that the September to November quarter was 71 percent higher. Swartz and Black (1981) conclude that raising the school entrance age would be a

positive step in improving education.

The case for implementing a full-day kindergarten program was presented by numerous authors. Alper and Wright (1979) documented that the five hour kindergarten program started in Phoenix, Arizona resulted in students scoring substantially higher on the *Metropolitan Readiness Test*. Herman (1984) cited a report from Evansville, Indiana which stated that children attending a pilot full-day kindergarten program scored higher on the *California Achievement Tests*, the *Boehm Test of Basic Concepts*, and the *Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests* than did children attending a half-day kindergarten.

Bradley (*1974*) presented results from a study of adjustments in the kindergarten curricula. In the study, a control group of kindergartners received only a pretest and posttest; one experimental group received the tests and learning profiles developed by specialists; the other experimental group received tests, profiles, and extra instruction from specialists. Significant differences between the control group and both experimental groups were noted. Bradley (1974:14) concluded that "early screening and identification can allow the kindergarten teacher to design a meaningful program within the classroom setting."

Weiner (ED 062 003) completed research on the results of placing developmentally delayed kindergarten students in a class staffed by a special education teacher and a

language therapist. Instruction was prescriptive and special education techniques were used. The conclusion was that special education was beneficial to non-handicapped children.

Hensley (1976) completed a study of screening and prescription for kindergarten students. The study was an attempt to solve the problem of a high percentage (35 percent) of special education referrals made for students in Kindergarten and grade one. The study concluded that identification of developmental immaturities, followed by implementing remedial prescriptions, improved the education of kindergarten and first grade students.

The use of rhymthic, optic, phonemic, kinesthetic, and melodic exercises to facilitate language acquisition in young children was studied by Salminen (1978). After three months of completing the exercises, the achievement level of the children had risen above the control group. The effect of the training was still noted two years later.

Garvey (1983) reported on a project in the Cleveland Public Schools which provided kindergarten teacher with supplemental instructional materials, with inservice training, and with aides for "targeted" children. One objective of the project was to improve the prereading skills of the kindergarten students. This objective was attained.

Overall, the conclusions presented in research supported a continuation of the current kindergarten practices at Stout Elementary. The research also supported additions to the program. The screening process and identification of high risk children should continue. Further, these children should continue to have the option of entering the kindergarten program a year later. For the high risk students remaining in kindergarten, research suggested the addition of using teacher aides (volunteer tutors) and of materials designed to improve developmental skills.

Support for Early Childhood Education in School District

The attitude of administrators in the central office of the school system was a facilitating factor in completion of the practicum strategies. The superintendent and assistant superintendents have a desire to continually improve instruction used in the schools. These administrators realized the importance of the kindergarten program, and supported earlier attempts made at Stout Elementary to improve the kindergarten program.

It was previously noted that the kindergarten teachers were a major strength of the program. The skills of the three teachers were instrumental to successfully improving the education of high risk kindergarten students. The

teachers cooperated with the principal and assisted with all phases of project implementation.

The school community of Stout Elementary included many parents willing to assist with school programs. The parents donated time and talent to help the school children. These parents made a large volunteer work force. The number of available parents was due to the "double enrollment" of children from the Stout Elementary and Sellersburg Elementary districts in the Stout Elementary kindergarten.

A hinderance to completion of practicum strategies was the lack of time available during the kindergarten day. The kindergarten at Stout Elementary was three hours. It was difficult to implement additional remedial activities and remain within this time framework.

Kindergarten Strategies Considered

One strategy for solving the identified problem was to continue the current screening and identification procedures. To this could be added the use of prescriptive teaching to attain developmental goals. This strategy would utilize the facilitating factor of effective teachers.

The implementation of a full-day kindergarten program was considered. Research (Herman, 1984) indicated that a

full-day program was beneficial to student learning. Further, research (Winter and Klein, 1970) did not document the suspected problem of tired and frustrated students.

Another promising strategy was the transition kindergarten program. This program was aimed for the developmentally young student. In most cases, the students completing this program attended a regular kindergarten program the next year.

The final strategy for consideration was a hybrid of the strategies already listed. This approach continued the screening and identification procedures used at Stout Elementary. Screening and identification as high risk was followed by using volunteer tutors. The volunteers practiced developmental skills on a one-to-one basis with the high risk students. In addition, training in improved parenting skills was provided to parents of high risk students. The aim was for the parents to assume the role of tutor with their child.

Kindergarten Strategy Selected

The continuation of current kindergarten practices without additional remediation for high risk students was not acceptable. While the full-day kindergarten was an exciting option, full-day kindergarten could not be authorized by the principal. The full-day program was also

beyond the financial support available for practicum strategies.

A kindergarten program utilizing a class as a transition kindergarten was not given serious consideration because of uncertain enrollment. The transition kindergarten planned for the 1982-83 school year was terminated when enrollment fell below the anticipated level. Even with spring registration, the number of student ultimately enrolled in the fall was too uncertain.

The strategy selected as most promising was continuation of screening and identification procedures used at Stout Elementary. These procedures were used as a foundation, and additions were made to the procedures. Programs of volunteer tutoring, of summer school remediation, and of absent student checks for the high risk students were implemented.

The use of volunteer tutors attacked two probable causes of high risk kindergartners not achieving satisfactory first grade readiness. Volunteer tutors increased the amount of instruction time in the kindergarten day. Volunteer tutors also increased the time spent in one-to-one instruction.

The volunteer tutor program used parents and selected sixth grade students. The tutors worked with pairs of high risk students in two 20 minute session each week. This schedule tripled the amount of one-to-one instruction each

high risk student received. The tutoring provided a 10 percent increase in instructional time each week by implementing the tutoring during non-instructional time.

Even though full-day kindergarten was not possible, further lengthening the amount of instruction for high risk kindergarten students was possible. This was done by implementing a program of remedial summer school instruction for high risk kindergartners. A summer school class added 20 days of instruction to kindergarten. The summer class met for two hours each day and included 100 minutes of instruction (Table 12:41). Since the regular school year kindergarten class has 90 minutes of instruction, the summer school class provided more instruction than a regular school day. The summer school program increased kindergarten instructional time by 13 percent. The additional instruction takes place nine months after school entry, thus helping the young at risk student.

Table 12

Amount of Daily Instruction in Summer School

Type of Activity	Amount of Time
Attendance - Opening Activity	5 minutes
Prepare for Dismissal	5 minutes
Free Play	10 minutes
Instruction	100 minutes

Maintaining good attendance was important for high risk kindergartners. However, the principal documented that attendance was a problem with high risk kindergartners. Therefore, to encourage good attendance, parents of all absent high risk students were called to verify the absence, to encourage a prompt return to school, and to arrange for make-up work.

The rationale for the selected strategy included the principal's commitment to kindergarten screening and the effectiveness of the present kindergarten teachers. The selected strategy built upon these areas. The selected approach also offered the most potential for helping the high risk kindergarten students within the constraints of Stout Elementary School. The project provided better education to children at risk.

Chapter 5

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT EARLYBIRD: HELP FOR HIGH RISK KINDERGARTNERS

Personnel Responsibilities in Project Earlybird

It should be noted that the keys to successful implementation of the project to help high risk kindergartners were the kindergarten teachers and the principal. The principal was the major figure in coordinating project implementation; the teachers were critical to implementation of daily project activities. The success of the project depended upon the site level administrator and classroom teachers being motivated for project success. The principal and teachers at Stout Elementary were motivated to help high risk kindergartners, and the program was labeled Project Earlybird. The success of any duplicate project would also depend upon the motivation and dedication of the principal and kindergarten teachers.

The principal's responsibilities illustrated the critical role of the building administrator. The principal was responsible for recruitment, selection and training of volunteer tutors. The principal was responsible for explaining the program to parents. The procedure for monitoring attendance problems was designed by the principal. The principal coordinated the summer school program, including teacher selection, instructional

materials selection, and course content. .Ultimately, the grade placement of the kindergarten students was approved by the principal.

Classroom teachers directed the tutoring of high risk students. The kindergarten teacher selected the specific skills that each student studied in the tutoring session. Selection and maintenance of computer tutorials was the responsibility of the kindergarten teachers.

The responsibilities and assignments for school personnel were delineated in nine action plans (Table 13:44). Successful implementation of the nine action plans completed the entire practicum strategy (Appendix C:111-119). The action plans listed: task objective; how to accomplishment the objective, when and where the implementation was to take place; and the person accountable for objective completion. The nine action plans necessary for implementing Project Earlybird encompassed: a program of telephone checks on absent high risk students, recruitment of tutors, training and assignment of tutors, implementation and supervision of tutoring tutors, evaluation of tutors, administration of the CTBS, design of summer school, implementation of summer school, and evaluation of project success.

In reporting implementation of the project, the writer reported each action plan as a separate section. Except for some overlap, the action plans must be accomplished in

numerical sequence. The writer expected that the specific focus and sequential nature of the action plans would aid in project completion and in project duplication. Preceding the sections on Action Plans, identification of high risk kindergartners for 1985-1986 was reported.

Table 13

Action Plans for Project Completion

Action Plan	Objective
#1	To design, implement, and evaluate a program of telephone checks on absent high risk students.
#2	To recruit and select (13) volunteer tutors.
#3	To train/assign (13) volunteer tutors.
#4	To implement/supervise tutoring program.
#5	To evaluate performance of tutors.
#6	To administer the CTBS
#7	To design summer instruction program.
#8	To implement summer instruction program.
#9	To evaluate success of high risk kindergartners, administer the FGRT.

Determining High Risk Kindergartners for 1985-1986

During the school year 1985-1986, high risk kindergartners were identified with the procedures listed in chapter two. The 1984-1985 procedure of using three methods to assess risk was used in 1985-1986. Students who registered in the spring of 1985 completed the SEPST; students who missed the spring registration completed the RPDSI in the fall; all students were assessed for risk by teacher observation (Table 1:11).

At the start of the 1985-1986 school year, 25 students were judged to be at high risk for failing to gain readiness skills during kindergarten. The SEPST identified 18 students as high risk; the RPSDI identified four high risk kindergartners, and the kindergarten teachers classified three additional students as high risk (Table 14:46). Total kindergarten enrollment was 107 students.

In 1985, 23 percent of Stout Elementary kindergartners were entering school as high risk. The percentage of high risk students dropped from the 34 percent level of 1984-1985 (Table 15:46). Nevertheless, a high risk level of 23 percent made meeting the needs of these students a significant problem. The principal reviewed the SEPST and RPDSI scores for the 1985-1986 students; it should be noted that the principal found these scores to be the lowest in recent years. The high risk problem of 1985-1986 did not involve as many students as in previous years, but the

problem was even more serious.

Table 14

1985-1986 High Risk Kindergartners Determined
By Each Assessment Method

Category	SEPST	RPSDI	Teacher Observation	Total
High Risk	18	4	3	25
Non Risk	70	15	--	82

High Risk (25) / Total Students (107) = 23% High Risk

Table 15

Percentage of High Risk Kindergartners
in 1984-1985 and 1985-1986

School Year	Total Students	High Risk	Percentage High Risk
1984-1985	110	37	34%
1985-1986	107	25	23%

Telephone Checks of Absent Students

During October 1985, the principal met with the three Stout kindergarten teachers to design a procedure for monitoring the absences of high risk kindergartners. At the time of the meeting, attendance procedures required that parents send a written note when a child returned from an absence. The note listed the reason for the absence. On the day of absence, parents were not required to telephone the school and the school did not telephone the home. At the staff meeting, the principal and teachers decided that the new procedure would incorporate telephone contact on the day of the absence.

A weekly attendance sheet was designed by the principal (Appendix D:120). The teachers sent the attendance sheet to the office at the beginning of morning and of afternoon kindergarten classes. The school secretary checked the list; if any high risk students were absent, the secretary called the home. The secretary recorded all telephone absence checks in a log book (Appendix E:121). The log book was periodically reviewed by the principal and teachers to monitor any serious attendance problems.

The principal and secretary discussed the objectives of the telephone check for absent students. The primary objective was to verify that the student was safe at home or at other custodial care. The secondary objective was to

verify that the absence was an excused absence. The school defined excused absence as illness, doctor appointment, or death in the immediate family. Furthermore, the need for tact and the desire to show concern for the child were discussed by the secretary and the principal. Agreement was reached that the principal would be notified by the secretary of any unexcused absences. The principal contacted the parents of the unexcused student and stressed the need for good attendance.

The procedure developed in the staff meeting worked as planned. However, two factors had a detrimental effect on the program. First, parents always reported that their child was sick. Since a doctor's excuse was not required for any amount of absence, the parents simply said the child was sick. Second, attendance in kindergarten was not required by state law. Most parents realized kindergarten was a voluntary program. The principal found that this negatively affected parental desire to maintain good attendance.

Telephone checks for absent high risk kindergartners began 10 November 1985. Despite the flaws of an easily obtained excuse and of a nonrequired program, the telephone checks continued until the close of the school year on 28 May 1986. The first implementation objective, implementing telephone checks for absent high risk students, was completed as planned (Appendix C:111).

Recruitment of Earlybird Tutors

Since 25 students were identified as high risk, 13 adult tutors were needed for Project Earlybird. The principal used two communication methods to alert parents that volunteers were needed. A written request in the school newsletter and a verbal request at a school music program were selected.

The Stout Elementary School Good Apple Report was published each month. The newsletter was sent home with each student. On 23 October 1985, a request for tutors was published in the newsletter. It should be noted that the principal chose not to present a complicated narrative about the program. The principal believed that a brief visually attractive article was the best method for presenting the request. The article asked that parents or grandparents donate 30 minutes each week working with kindergartners (Appendix F:122). Interested adults were asked to call the school or to send a note to school.

During October, the first and second grades at Stout presented an evening music program. On 29 October 1985, the principal talked about Project Earlybird during an intermission of the music program. Over 600 adults attended the program and heard the explanation of Project Earlybird. The principal closed the explanation with a request that the adults in attendance volunteer to tutor high risk kindergartners. It should be noted that the

principal emphasized that adults who volunteered to tutor would make a significant difference in the school life of a kindergartner. The principal also stressed that volunteers needed no special skills other than a desire to help and a willingness to make a regular weekly commitment.

One week after the music program, six adults had contacted the school to volunteer for Project Earlybird. The newsletter article had been sent home with over 500 students; the principal's request had been heard by over 600 adults. After these efforts, the recruitment of only six volunteers was disappointing. Furthermore, an additional seven tutors were required to implement Project Earlybird.

The school secretary recorded information on the six adult volunteers. On 15 November 1985, the principal used this information to contact the volunteers. A short thank you note was mailed to each volunteer (Appendix G:123). The note advised the volunteer that a training meeting would soon be held. Furthermore, the note stressed that the volunteer would truly help kindergarten students.

The principal and kindergarten teachers discussed methods for recruiting more volunteers. Another written request and telephone recruitment by the home school organization were considered. However, the school staff believed that these efforts might "push" adults into volunteering. The staff believed these "pushed" volunteers

would lack the commitment to see the program through to completion. Therefore, the principal and teachers chose to search for volunteers from another talent pool, sixth grade students.

At a Project Earlybird strategy meeting in early November, the staff agreed that sixth grade students possessed all the academic skills necessary to serve as a kindergarten tutor. The key was to select dependable and responsible students. The decision was made to consult with the grade six teachers in choosing the tutors. It should also be noted that the principal decided to use two sixth graders with two kindergartners. While each adult would tutor two kindergartners at a time, a pair of sixth graders would tutor two kindergartners. This arrangement increased the confidence of the sixth graders.

Two days after the recruitment strategy meeting, the principal met with the three Stout sixth grade teachers. The principal explained Project Earlybird to these teachers. The sixth grade teachers had read about the project in the school newsletter, but had not heard the presentation at the music program. Therefore, the principal took care to review the objectives of the project with these upper grade teachers. The need for sixth grade students to tutor was explained; the principal stressed that responsible, self disciplined students were needed.

The sixth grade teachers supported the use of sixth graders in the project, but the teachers were concerned about the students missing sixth grade class work. It was agreed that all tutoring by sixth graders would be completed during recess time. Sixth graders would tutor either at the 10:00 AM recess or the 12:40 PM recess. At the close of the meeting, the principal instructed the teachers to submit the names of 14 tutors to the office. The three teachers met the next day to select the 14 most responsible sixth grade students. Two days later, a list of 14 tutor candidates was presented to the principal.

The list of sixth grade tutor candidates was reviewed by the principal and kindergarten teachers. Many of the sixth graders were taught in kindergarten by the current kindergarten teachers. Other students were familiar to the principal. The cooperation of the sixth grade teachers in compiling the list of candidates insured that the selection procedure was successful. All sixth grade candidates were accepted as Earlybird tutors.

The recruitment process began in late October with a newsletter request, used a verbal presentation by the principal, and concluded with selection of sixth grade students tutors. The Earlybird tutoring corp was six adult tutors and 14 student tutors. The second implementation objective, recruiting tutors, was completed on 10 November 1986 (Appendix C:112).

Final Preparation for Earlybird Tutoring

During the third week of November, the principal held a staff meeting with the kindergarten teachers. Effective use of Earlybird volunteers was discussed at the meeting. The basic questions of who, what, how, when, and where were discussed and resolved at the meeting.

The "who" question was answered by the staff agreeing that the adult tutors would work with the 12 kindergartners of greatest need. The sixth grade tutors would be assigned the better skilled kindergartners. The staff members reviewed each student's score on the SEPST or RPSDI. The 12 students with the lowest scores were recorded by the principal; the principal would use the 12 students when scheduling the adult tutors.

The "what" question was answered by the staff agreeing that the tutors would review assignments made during the regular kindergarten class. The teachers found that the Earlybirds, high risk kindergartners, were not able to complete the regular kindergarten work load. The Earlybirds needed extra time and extra assistance to complete the work that non-risk kindergartners completed during class time. The teachers believed that the greatest benefit of tutoring would be in this area, rather than in the area of covering new material.

The staff agreed that when the tutor had covered all incomplete class assignments, the tutor would review sound

letter correspondence and number skills. The tutor would also help the Earlybird with fine motor skills. Letter and number printing would be stressed.

The "how" question was also resolved at the staff meeting. The principal suggested that a folder be made for each Earlybird. The teachers would place any unfinished work in each Earlybird folder. Then during the bi-weekly tutoring sessions, the tutor would cover all material in the folder. If the directions for each page in the folder were not clear, the teachers would place a direction note on the paper. In this manner, the tutor would easily know which materials to cover, and the tutor would not have to disturb the teacher during class time.

The staff agreed that letter recognition, letter sounds, and counting would be covered with computer assisted instruction. The tutor would assist the Earlybird in completing computer lessons. Computer assistance was chosen because each student could work at an individual pace and because students were motivated by the computer. The principal agreed to dedicate one of the school's 18 Apple IIe computers for Project Earlybird. At the staff meeting, the principal also agreed to secure necessary software for Project Earlybird.

The "when" question was resolved at the November staff meeting. The principal and teachers had originally planned that tutoring would occur during non-instructional time,

and the principal was to schedule tutoring into non-instruction time. However, the decision to use sixth grade students as tutors resulted in agreement to use upper grade recess time for tutoring (kindergarten did not have recess).

Where Earlybird tutoring was to be conducted was resolved at the staff meeting. Two of the three kindergarten classrooms had a connecting coatroom. The coatroom was directly accessible by these two rooms, and was close to the third kindergarten classroom. The coatroom also had an outside door. The coatroom was the best choice for locating the tutoring. At the staff meeting, the coatroom officially became the Earlybird Room.

During the next school days after the November staff meeting, the principal began a search for appropriate computer software, and the teachers began to assemble "hands on" materials and decorations for the Earlybird Room. *Muppet Learning Keys (MLK) (Koala,* et al, 1984) was selected as the foundation for computer assisted instruction. This product freed the Earlybirds from using the traditional computer keyboard. Letters and numbers were placed in sequential order on the MLK. Also included on the keyboard were eight color keys and four direction keys. Software containing three programs to teach letter, number, picture, and color recognition were included in the basic MLK package. The

principal also purchased an additional software package for the MLK; this software was *Getting Ready to Read and Add* (GRRA) (Cole, 1984). GRRA used sound, color, and animation to teach upper and lower case letters. The program offered practice in discriminating between and among shapes. Number recognition and number sequence were also covered in GRRA.

The teachers gathered several instructional materials for the Earlybird Room. A chalkboard with chalk and magnetic letters was placed in the room. A collection of picture and letter cards was maintained in the Earlybird Room. The teachers included pads of paper and pencils for printing and for drawing. Simple board games were also placed in the Earlybird Room. The teachers also decorated the room with bulletin board cutouts and pictures. Creating a pleasant learning environment was important to the principal and to the teachers.

During the final days of November, the principal scheduled the tutoring sessions for each Earlybird. The Earlybirds were divided into pairs; each pair was assigned one adult tutor or a team of two sixth grade tutors. The adults were scheduled to tutor at 8:20 AM for morning kindergarten or at 1:00 PM for afternoon kindergarten. The sixth graders were scheduled to tutor at 10:00 AM for morning kindergarten or at 12:45 PM for afternoon kindergarten. Each Earlybird was tutored twice each week for at

least 20 minutes each session. The Earlybirds with the lowest level of skills were assigned to the adult tutors.

At the close of November, the principal telephoned each adult tutor to confirm their schedule. All six adult tutors were women who did not work outside the home. Each schedule was confirmed as proposed. It should be noted that in most cases the volunteers told the principal that "I can work whenever you need me."

After the adult tutor schedule was confirmed, the principal conferred with the sixth grade teachers concerning the commitment of the student tutors. Previously, the sixth grade teachers had talked with all of the sixth grade candidates, and all of the sixth graders wanted to work as volunteer tutors. The principal then divided the sixth graders into pairs. Each pair was scheduled to work with two Earlybirds twice each week. The principal sent a copy of the completed schedule (Appendix H:124) to the kindergarten teachers, the sixth grade teachers, the adult tutors, and the student tutors.

Included with the schedule, the principal sent each tutor the date and time for a training session. Each adult was assigned an individual training session. All of the sixth grade tutors were assigned to attend one group training session. The adults were scheduled for training on the same day and time as their scheduled tutoring. As an example, an adult that was scheduled to tutor on

Tuesdays and Thursday at 8:20 AM received training on Tuesday at 8:20 AM. The sixth graders were scheduled for training during a lunch recess. All seven training sessions, six adult and one student, were conducted by the principal. The kindergarten teachers were not involved in the training sessions because kindergarten classes met at these times. Since the principal conducted all training sessions, the training was consistent for all tutors.

The first adult training session was held with Mrs. A. The study of Mrs. A's training illustrated the scope and content of all of the training sessions. The first adult training was held 4 December 1985; the last adult training sessions was held 6 December 1985.

Mrs. A arrived at the principal's office and was welcomed with coffee. The coffee with table and chair seating was part of an attempt to make the training session as cordial and as informal as possible. The principal began the session by again thanking Mrs. A for volunteering to tutor. The principal explained that five other adults and sixth grade students would be tutoring the Earlybirds.

Mrs. A asked why a mix of adults and students was being used as tutors. The principal explained that 25 kindergartners had been identified as needing tutors, which required 13 adult tutors. The principal further explained to Mrs. A that the use of students was necessary due to the small number of adult volunteers. Mrs. A reported that she

could not believe that more adults did not volunteer; she further reported that she was ashamed of all the parents that could have helped, but had not volunteered.

It should be noted that the principal believed it was important for each tutor to understand why Project Earlybird was being started. Therefore, the principal reviewed the 1984-1985 data that showed only 63 percent of high risk kindergartners were successful in starting grade one. Mrs. A reported that she had no idea that some children faced such a difficult "way to go." The principal explained that the goal of the project was to have 75 percent of the students successful in starting grade one.

The principal then explained to Mrs. A what she would do as a tutor. The principal reviewed the use of incomplete work folders and helping the Earlybird finish work that was assigned during kindergarten class. Mrs. A was advised that, at the start of each tutoring session, she should pick-up the folders for her two students from the Earlybird Room. She was to review the work and then bring the two students from their class to the Earlybird Room. The principal then explained to Mrs. A that she should review the instructions with the students and that she should help them finish the work. The principal explained that the tutor was not to "give" the answers to the student, but that the tutor was to guide the student in completing the work.

During the next section of the training session, the principal explained to Mrs. A that maintaining student confidentiality was very important. The principal told Mrs. A that whatever she learned about the Earlybird students was not to be discussed outside of school. The principal encouraged Mrs. A to talk with the kindergarten teachers or principal if she had any questions or concerns. The principal also stressed the need for Mrs. A to be prompt and responsible in fulfilling her tutoring assignments. At this point, the principal escorted Mrs. A to the Earlybird Room.

The second portion of the training session took place in the Earlybird Room. The principal showed Mrs. A where the student work folders were kept. The various "hands on" materials were examined. Nevertheless, most of the time spent in the Earlybird Room was used to learn operation of the computer.

Mrs. A had no previous experience with computers. The principal carefully explained how to boot the computer. Proper disk care, including how to insert the disks in the computer, was reviewed. Once the disk software was in place, the principal explained how to turn on the processor. After the principal's demonstration, Mrs. A practiced booting the computer several times.

The MLK keyboard was reviewed with Mrs. A. The principal advised that the MLK would make the computer

software easier to operate. The principal explained that the kindergarten teacher would note in the Earlybird's folder what computer program was to be used. The teacher's note would also include which letters or numbers to practice in the computer program. After 15 minutes of practice with the computer, Mrs. A reported that she thought she "could do it."

The last portion of the training session was devoted to introducing the Earlybirds and Mrs. A. The principal escorted Mrs. A from the Earlybird Room to the kindergarten classroom. The principal introduced Mrs. A to the kindergarten teacher. It should be noted that Mrs. A's children had been enrolled in the teacher's kindergarten class a few years earlier. Nevertheless, the kindergarten teacher warmly welcomed Mrs. A, and the teacher thanked Mrs. A for helping with this important project. At this point, the spirits of all the adults, principal, teacher, and tutor, were at a high point.

The kindergarten teacher called the two students assigned to Mrs. A. The Earlybird came to the area of the room where the adults were talking. At this point, the kindergarten teacher completed the introduction of the students to Mrs. A. The teacher introduced the tutor as a special classroom helper who would work with just "you two boys." After the introduction, the tutor was invited to stay and watch the kindergarten class "in action." Mrs. A

remained in the classroom: the tutor sat at the same table as the two assigned Earlybirds.

At this point, the principal left the classroom and the training session for Mrs. A was completed. The other five adult training sessions proceeded in much the same fashion. All of the tutors were surprised that so few parents had volunteered. None of the tutors had previous experience with computers. All of the tutors were former Stout kindergarten parents, and all of the tutors seemed sincerely pleased that they had been asked to help at school. Each of the six adult training sessions lasted approximately one hour.

On 9 December 1985, the principal met with the sixth grade tutors. A group meeting was held in the school library during lunch recess. The format used in the adult training sessions was adapted for use with the sixth graders.

The principal thanked the students for volunteering to help in the kindergarten project. Special note was made about the student's donation of recess time. The principal explained that the sixth graders would be completing work that was originally planned for adults. The principal expressed pride that the sixth grade teachers had recommended the students to complete the adult job.

The principal explained that some kindergartners entered school with fewer skills than their classmates and

that these kindergartners required more time to complete school work. The principal carefully pointed out that these kindergartners should not be considered "stupid", but that the kindergartners needed more help than their peers. It should be noted that the students understood this concept, and that some sixth graders told about times when they had needed extra help.

The principal explained that the sixth graders would help the kindergartners finish school work and would help the kindergartners work with the computer. The principal showed the student tutors an Earlybird work folder and explained that the work to be finished would be kept in the folder. Several samples of unfinished kindergarten papers were examined. Direction notes from the kindergarten teachers about the work were reviewed. The principal talked about how to give guidance in completing the work without giving the answer.

The principal reviewed the need to keep information about the kindergartners confidential. The principal talked about reputations and about how the kindergartners reputations could be hurt by the sixth graders. The principal concluded the discussion on confidentiality by stating that any sixth grader who talked about a kindergartner outside of school would be immediately terminated from the tutoring program.

In contrast to the adult tutors who knew little about computers, the sixth grade tutors were computer literate. All sixth grade tutors knew how to boot the computer, and the tutors felt confident in working with various types of computer software. The principal reviewed the MLK keyboard and accompanying software. The students reported "no problems" with using the computer.

At the close of the training session, the tutoring scheduled was reviewed. The principal checked each tutor to make sure the assigned days and times were understood. The principal then told the tutors to report to the assigned kindergarten teacher during their next scheduled tutoring session. The principal asked for any questions, but no questions were asked. The training session concluded; the session had lasted 40 minutes.

Action plan three, training and assigning tutors was successfully completed by 10 December 1985. In summary, the activities necessary to complete the action plan were: conducting a staff meeting for implementation strategy, obtaining computer software, obtaining "hands on" teaching materials, and stocking and decorating the Earlybird Room. In addition the principal scheduled all Earlybirds to two tutoring sessions each week and trained all Earlybird tutors.

Implementation of Earlybird Tutoring

Earlybird tutoring began during the week of 9 December 1985. The adult and the student tutors met with their assigned students on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday of that week. The principal accompanied each adult tutor to their first tutoring session. The principal also supervised the first session of each sixth grade tutor. It should be noted that the principal's presence was to insure a successful start for each tutor and Earlybird student.

The tutoring sessions proceeded as expected. The tutors assisted the Earlybirds with incomplete class assignments. The Earlybirds that completed all class work practiced letter and number recognition. The tutors used the computer and other hands-on materials to reinforce readiness skills. All tutors were able to boot the assigned computer software and were able to use the MLK keyboard.

By 18 December 1985, all Earlybirds had received three or four tutoring sessions. On this date, the kindergarten teachers and principal met to evaluate the start of the program. If necessary, tutoring procedures were to be revised.

All three teachers related that the tutoring program was proceeding smoothly. All tutors were reporting at the assigned times. Tutors and Earlybirds were enthused and excited about the program. Assignments that normally were

incomplete were finished during the tutoring sessions. The teachers reported that any classroom interaction or group instruction that the Earlybirds missed during tutoring was compensated by the individual attention received. The staff members agreed that tutor assignments, tutor schedules, and tutor procedures were satisfactory. No changes were made in Earlybird procedures at the this staff meeting.

The kindergarten teachers and principal discussed that the principal would be less active in the project as the tutoring continued. In tutor recruitment, in tutor selection, in tutor scheduling, in tutor training, and in initial tutoring, the principal was the leader. In continuing the daily tutoring, the kindergarten teachers were the leaders. The teachers evaluated the completed student work, assigned the next work for the tutor, and reported student progress to the principal and to the parents. At the close of the 18 December staff meeting, the teachers and principal agreed to hold an Earlybird staff meeting each Friday.

Earlybird tutoring with weekly staff meetings continued during January, February, March, April, and May. The teachers supervised the tutoring, and the tutoring continued without any major problems. Five activities that occurred during the five months of tutoring should be noted.

First, the principal developed a student progress report form. Each month, the teachers completed a report for all Earlybirds. It should be noted that the report could be quickly completed by the kindergarten teachers, yet the report would alert the principal to any Earlybird problems (Appendix I:125). The identification information on the report was completed by the school secretary. The kindergarten teachers answered six questions that covered Earlybird progress, tutor performance, and recommended changes. The progress report was first completed on 29 January 1986, thereafter progress reports were completed by the teachers from February to May. The reports indicated that the tutoring program proceeded satisfactorily and that the Earlybirds benefited from the tutoring.

Second, the principal presented a summary of the Earlybird program at Indiana University Southeast (IUS). On 5 March 1986, the principal talked with students of a graduate class in early childhood education. The members of the class were either recent IUS graduates or practicing kindergarten teachers. The principal explained the Stout Elementary procedures for identifying high risk kindergartners. The principal also described the tutoring program that was used at Stout. Members of the class that were not teaching were encouraged to work as volunteers at the Stout kindergarten screening program (in April, two members of the IUS class did work at the screening

program). It should be noted that the interaction with the class members and with the instructor further convinced the principal that Project Earlybird was an important facet of the Stout kindergarten program (Appendix J:126).

Third, the tutors were recognized for their work in Project Earlybird. The principal hosted two soft drink parties for sixth grade tutors. Sixth grade tutors were dismissed from 30 minutes of afternoon classes to talk with the principal. Soft drinks and chips were served at the discussion session. The principal also presented identification badges to the sixth grade tutors. The badges included the student's picture and Earlybird tutor label. The badge allowed the tutor to move to the front of the lunch line. It should be noted that the line privilege allowed the tutor to finish lunch in time for recess tutoring, but more importantly the badge and lunch line privilege was a positive status symbol for the tutor. Another positive status symbol for the student tutors was their introduction during a basketball pep session. The tutors received the applause of the entire student body. The adult tutors received a recognition letter and potted house plant from the school. The letter and the plant were delivered to the tutor's home during early March.

Fourth, the number of Earlybird students dropped from 25 students to 16 students. During January through May, five Earlybirds moved from the school district. During

April and May, four Earlybirds were referred for special education evaluation. Two of these Earlybirds were classified as mildly mentally handicapped, and the other two Earlybirds were classified as learning disabled. These four students were placed into special education classes. After placement into special education classes, the students no longer received instruction in the kindergarten classes or tutoring in Project Earlybird.

The tutors assigned to the nine students who left the Earlybird Program continued to tutor until May. Teachers in grade one and in grade two requested that these tutors assist with remedial students in first and second grade. The principal approved the teachers' request, and ten students in the primary grades were helped by tutors who were originally assigned to high risk kindergartners.

Fifth, the tutoring concluded in early May. Each year, the kindergarten teachers host a "Mother's Day Tea". On 8 May 1986, adult and student tutors were invited to the Tea as special guests of the Earlybirds. Nearly all kindergarten mothers attended the tea. The kindergarten teachers explained Project Earlybird to the mothers in attendance. The teachers introduced the tutors and thanked the tutors for their work with the kindergarten students. The Mother's Day Tea marked the official close of the tutoring program.

The tutoring began in December and concluded in May. The tutoring proceeded as planned and no problems were noted. The fourth implementation objective, implementing tutoring, was completed on 8 May 1986 (Appendix C:114).

Evaluation of Tutors

Evaluation of the tutors was the responsibility of the kindergarten teachers. At the 18 December staff meeting, the principal and teachers agreed that the teachers would monitor the performance of the tutors. The teachers were to advise the principal of any problems with tutors. Tutor performance was reviewed at the weekly Earlybird staff meetings.

No major problems with tutor performance were reported. All tutors completed six months of tutoring. It should be noted that recognition through parties, letters, badges, and gifts helped to maintain enthusiasm for the project.

One minor problem developed from the over-enthusiasm of a sixth grade student tutor. The sixth grade student "loved" to tutor the kindergartners. The student tutored during every possible minute, and completed extra activities with the two assigned Earlybirds. The student, without permission from the kindergarten teacher, sent hand written progress notes to the parents of the Earlybirds.

The kindergarten teacher learned about the notes when a parent called to question the "strange" notes that were being sent home with the student. The teacher calmed the parent and counseled the tutor that unauthorized notes were not permitted.

In May, at the conclusion of the tutoring program, all tutors completed a short questionnaire (Appendix K:127). The tutors were asked to describe what they did as a tutor, to list what they liked and disliked about being a tutor, to suggest changes in the tutoring program, and to describe how they felt about being a tutor. The responses included: "helped on their sounds and forming numbers and letters", "helped them do their work, then we used the computer and played games, if we had time", and "helped them with their reading skills and harder math problems". The majority of the tutors mentioned that they liked helping the Earlybirds. The change that was most often requested was more time to tutor. When tutors were asked how they felt, most tutors responded that they felt good and had fun.

Measuring Achievement with the CTBS

Achievement in reading, in mathematics, and in language was measured by the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS). The CTBS had been used in kindergarten for the last four years. The kindergarten teachers were experienced in administering the tests.

On 7 April 1986, the school district office issued the CTBS materials to the principal. The teachers had one week to review the test manuals and to mark the identification information on each student test booklet. Stout kindergartners began taking the CTBS on 14 April 1986. Testing continued during the next two days.

Students who were absent during one of the three days of testing finished the CTBS on Thursday, 17 April 1986. On 18 April 1986, the teachers and the principal forwarded the tests to the school district office. Thereafter, the school district sent the tests to the McGraw-Hill Company for grading.

Stout Elementary School received results from the CTBS on 22 May 1986. The principal reviewed test results with each kindergarten teacher. Results for individual students were sent to parents with the final report card on 29 May 1986. The sixth implementation objective, administering the CTBS, was completed as planned (Appendix C:116).

Designing the Summer School Program

The local school corporation had offered summer school to students in first through sixth grades for the last two years. The summer program was 20 days in length, and summer classes met for two hours. Three classes were offered in the summer. Enrichment classes included

special exploration of academic areas and work with computers. Remedial math classes stressed learning basic math facts. Remedial language arts classes taught basic sight words, vocabulary, comprehension, and composition (Appendix L:128). Kindergarten students had not participated in summer school during the last two years.

On 18 April 1986, the principal presented a kindergarten summer school proposal to the superintendent. The proposal was that the school district include kindergartners in the remedial language arts summer class. Project Earlybird activities were reviewed, and the principal explained that summer instruction was important in continuing Earlybird activities. The superintendent agreed that kindergarten summer school would be beneficial to the high risk kindergartners. Nevertheless, the superintendent explained that the current summer program was funded by the state, and that kindergarten summer instruction would not receive state funds. The possibility of using local funds was explored, but an acceptable source for funding was not found. At the close of the meeting, summer school for kindergartners was a dead issue.

During the two weeks after the meeting with the superintendent, the principal began to design a kindergarten summer program that would use volunteer tutors. The summer program was to be a continuation of Earlybird tutoring that occurred during the regular school

year. Two weeks after the meeting with the superintendent, all principals of the school district met to finalize summer school enrollment and class lists; the need for a volunteer kindergarten summer class was eliminated at this meeting.

On 30 April 1986, the district's six elementary school principals met with the assistant superintendent for instruction. The purpose of the meeting was to finalize summer school enrollment, to set class lists, and to determine the number of teachers required. Determining an accurate summer enrollment was important because state funding was issued on a per pupil basis. After determining enrollment, the administrators realized that too few students were enrolled to produce adequate state funding.

The author suggested that kindergartners enroll in summer school to increase total enrollment. The assistant superintendent responded that he was "afraid the state will not count kindergarten pupils in the funding formula." Nevertheless, the assistant superintendent consulted a recent state bulletin that detailed the summer school funding formula. The bulletin stated that students in kindergarten through eighth grade were accepted in the funding count for elementary summer school. After reviewing the bulletin, the principals unanimously accepted the author's proposal to include kindergartners in the remedial language arts summer school class. Based upon

information in the funding bulletin, the assistant superintendent and the superintendent approved inclusion of kindergartners in the district's elementary summer school.

On 2 May 1986 at the weekly kindergarten staff meeting, the principal and Stout teachers discussed curriculum content for kindergarten summer school. The teachers stated that the Earlybirds continued to require work in letter recognition, in letter sounds, in letter formation, and in fine motor skills. Agreement was reached that these areas would be stressed in the summer school class. The principal requested that the teachers draft a note that listed each Earlybird's strengths and weaknesses. Later, the notes would be given to the kindergarten summer school teacher. The summer school teacher would also have access to the monthly Earlybird progress reports.

The staff members discussed which learning materials should be used. Agreement was reached that the Earlybirds would continue with the materials used during the regular school year. The teachers believed that the summer school teacher could vary the application of the regular materials and could provide new teacher-made materials to reinforce learning. On 2 May 1986, action plan seven, designing a summer school program, was successfully completed.

Implementation of Summer School

On 9 May 1986, at the weekly kindergarten staff meeting, the teachers and the principal reviewed the list of kindergartners who the teachers had recommended for the summer school program. In making the list the teachers gave priority to Earlybirds. Nevertheless, non-risk kindergartners were eligible for summer school. Three non-risk kindergartners and thirteen of the sixteen Earlybirds were recommended to attend summer school. Three of the Earlybirds were not recommended for summer school for two reasons. First, two of the Earlybirds were to be retained in kindergarten. The teachers believed these students would benefit from being home during the entire summer break. Second, one of the Earlybirds was progressing satisfactorily, and this student did not need to attend summer school. The principal approved the teachers' summer school recommendations.

On 13 May 1986, letters that explained the summer school program were mailed to the parents of the sixteen recommended kindergarten students (Appendix M:129). The letter explained that the child was recommended to attend a remedial summer school program in language arts. Program calendar and class time was included in the letter; the letter further explained that the class was tuition free and that full attendance was required. Parents enrolled the child by returning the bottom of the letter.

During 16 May to 23 May 1986, the school secretary received the returned summer school enrollment slips. Fifteen kindergartners of the 16 students recommended enrolled in summer school. The kindergartner who did not enroll was an Earlybird; the parents indicated that the family's two week vacation fell during summer school.

On May 20 1986, the superintendent assigned eight teachers to the Stout summer school program. The teachers were to cover three subjects, remedial language arts, remedial mathematics, and enrichment in kindergarten through grade six. Each teacher taught two classes each day. One of the teachers was a Stout kindergarten teacher. Another of the assigned teachers taught first grade at Stout; three years earlier, this teacher had taught kindergarten at Stout. Because of the teacher's successful experience in kindergarten and grade one, the principal assigned this teacher to teach grade one enrichment and kindergarten remedial language arts. The principal and the regular kindergarten teacher believed that a "new" teacher would be beneficial to the Earlybirds. It should be noted that securing a teacher experienced in both kindergarten and grade one was an important asset to the project.

On 23 May 1986, the Earlybird summer school teacher met with the three kindergarten teachers. The teachers discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each summer Earlybird, and descriptive notes about each student were

given to the summer school teacher. The kindergarten teachers reviewed the proposed curriculum content of letter recognition, of letter sounds, of number sequence and correspondence, and of fine motor skills. The summer school teacher agreed that the proposed content was appropriate. During the days following the meeting, the kindergarten summer school teacher gathered materials and wrote lessons plans.

On 5 June 1986, the first of twenty Earlybird summer school classes was held. Attendance on opening day was disappointing. Four students who were enrolled in the class were not present on the first day of summer school. The principal contacted the four families and was told the students would not be attending summer school. Reasons given for not attending included "he (the student) just doesn't want to go now", "I couldn't find her (the student) a ride to school", and "we decided to leave town next week". Eleven Earlybirds continued to attend summer school during the 20 day session. During the session, attendance by the Earlybirds was at the 98.6 percent level.

Instruction in the summer class proceeded as planned. The Earlybirds worked with letter and number skills. The teacher emphasized use of the chalkboard and de-emphasized use of dittos and use of workbook pages. The teacher reported that the effort was to make "summer school not like regular school." The students made saltdough, painted

art projects, cooked foods, and cut paper projects. Many of the summer activities stressed following directions.

On 2 July 1986, kindergarten summer school concluded. The teacher reported, "I enjoyed teaching summer school with the kindergarten students; I think the kids liked it and made some progress." The teacher also noted that the Earlybirds continued to require one-to-one instruction; the students struggled with instruction that was presented in a group setting.

Formal evaluation of student progress during summer school was prohibited by local school district policy. Summer school was not to be used as a basis for next year's grade placement. The administrators of the school district designed summer school as additional instruction reinforcement rather than "a way not to be retained." All Earlybirds that attended summer school had been promoted to or placed in grade one by the regular kindergarten teacher. Therefore, all Earlybirds that completed summer school were set to begin grade one in the fall. On 2 July 1986, action plan eight, implementation of summer school, was successfully completed.

Evaluating the Earlybird Students

On 25 August 1986, fourteen of the Earlybirds started grade one at Stout Elementary. In making class lists, the principal divided the 14 students among six grade one classrooms. During the first week of school, the principal discussed the history of each Earlybird with the first grade teachers. The teachers were instructed to observe the students for adjustment problems and to document any serious difficulties.

On 2 September 1986, one of the Earlybird students was returned from first grade to kindergarten. The grade one teacher reported that the student was unable to complete first grade activities. The teacher relayed this information to the principal; the teacher recommended that the student return to kindergarten. The principal approved the recommendation, and the teacher was instructed to contact the student's parents to secure their approval for the transfer. The parents agreed to the transfer, and the student was enrolled in kindergarten.

On 9 September 1986, the first grade teachers administered the FGRT to all grade one students. The teachers graded the readiness tests, and the results were forwarded to the principal. One of the 13 Earlybird students scored below the cut score for passing the test. The principal and teacher discussed the student's test results and classroom progress. The educators agreed that

for an appropriate placement the student should return to kindergarten. The teacher contacted the child's parents; the parents refused to approve the student's transfer to kindergarten. Because school district policy prohibited retention in kindergarten without parent approval, the Earlybird who "failed" the FGRT remained in grade one. On 12 September 1986, the implementation objective of action plan nine, administration of the FGRT, was successfully completed.

Chapter 6

MEASURING OUTCOMES OF PROJECT EARLYBIRD

The Objectives and the Measurement of Project Earlybird

Five terminal objectives were identified for the practicum project. First, the number of high risk kindergarten students attaining successful first grade readiness was to increase from the 1984-1985 level of 62 percent to 75 percent. Second, the reading mean score of high risk kindergartners on the CTBS was to increase from the 1984-1985 level of percentile 39 to percentile 50. Third, the language mean score of high risk kindergartners on the CTBS was to increase from the 1984-1985 level of percentile 44 to percentile 55. Fourth, the mathematics mean score of high risk kindergartners on the CTBS was to increase from the 1984-1985 level of percentile 44 to percentile 55. Fifth, the average daily absence rate of high risk kindergartners was to decrease from the 1984-1985 level of 29 percent above the mean rate to 15 percent above the mean rate (Chapter 3:30-32).

Objective one was measured by charting the number of high risk kindergartners that withdrew from kindergarten, that were retained in kindergarten, and that failed the FGRT. The sum of these three categories was the number of unsuccessful Earlybirds. Objective two, objective three,

and objective four were measured by charting results on the CTBS. The results from the Earlybirds and from the non-risk kindergartners were compared. Objective five was measured by charting student attendance records; thereafter, attendance for the Earlybirds and for the non-risk students was contrasted.

High Risk Kindergartner Success: Objective One

At the beginning of the 1985-1986 school year, 25 students from the 107 student kindergarten were determined to be at risk for failure (Table 14:46). The Earlybirds, high risk kindergartners, received volunteer tutoring and summer school instruction. During 1985-1986, five Earlybirds moved from the school district; the kindergarten success of these students could not be evaluated. Four Earlybirds were placed in special education programs during the school year. After placement in special education, these students did not participate in the practicum project. At the close of 1985-1986, the special education Earlybirds were scheduled to receive all "grade one instruction" in a resource room program. The author did not consider these students in measuring objective one. The loss of the five students who moved and the four students who enrolled in special education diminished the Earlybird group to 16 students.

During 1985-1986, no Earlybirds withdrew from kindergarten and returned home. Three Earlybirds were retained in kindergarten. Two of the retained students started the year in kindergarten; the other retained student was sent back to kindergarten during the first two weeks of the school year. One Earlybird failed the FGRT; due to parental objection to retention, this student continued an inappropriate placement in first grade. Students in any of the divisions; returned home, retained, and failed FGRT; were unsuccessful in kindergarten (Table 8:20). During 1985-1986, four high risk kindergartners from the cluster of 16 students were unsuccessful in kindergarten. These students were not able to successfully gain first grade readiness skills. The level of high risk students that successfully gained first grade readiness skills was 75 percent. The first terminal objective was successfully completed; the number of high risk kindergartners attaining success increased from 62 percent (1984-1985) to 75 percent (1985-1986) (Table 16:85). It should be noted that all non-risk kindergartners successfully gained first grade readiness skills. This success rate of 100 percent for non-risk students equalled the success rate of the previous year (Table 17:85).

Table 16

1984-1986 Earlybird Success in First Grade Readiness

	1985-1986	1984-1985
Withdrawn From Kindergarten	0	6
Retained In Kindergarten	3	5
Failed FGRT	1	3
Total Unsuccessful	4	14
Total High Risk	16	37
Percent Successful	75%	62%

Table 17

1985-1986 Kindergarten Success in First Grade Readiness

Student Group	Students in Group	Students Successful	Percent Sucessful
All Kindergartners	95	91	96%
High Risk	16	12	75%
Non-Risk	79	79	100%

Academic Achievement: Objectives Two Through Four

All kindergartners completed the CTBS in April, 1986. The Earlybirds had a mean score of percentile 49 in reading achievement. The reading mean score of all kindergartners was percentile 58; the reading mean score of non-risk kindergartners was percentile 61 (Table 18:86). The Earlybirds had a mean score of percentile 52 in language achievement. The language mean score of all kindergartners and non-risk kindergartners was percentile 59 and percentile 63, respectively (Table 18:86). The Earlybirds earned a mean score of percentile 46 in mathematics achievement. The mathematics mean score of all kindergartners was percentile 63; the mathematics mean score of non-risk kindergartners was percentile 69 (Table 18:86).

Table 18

1985-1986 Kindergarten CTBS Mean Scores of Risk Groups

Student Group	Reading Nat'l Percentile	Language Nat'l Percentile	Math Nat'l Percentile
All Students	58	59	62
High Risk	49	52	46
Non-Risk	61	63	69

Partial success was achieved in objectives two through four. Objective two specified a reading mean score of percentile 50 for high risk students. The reading mean score did increase from the 1984-1985 level of percentile 39 to the current level of percentile 49. Nevertheless, the mean score was one percentile point below the specified success level of percentile 50 (Table 19:88).

Objective three specified a language mean score of percentile 55 for high risk students. The language mean score did increase by eight percentile points from the 1984-1985 level of percentile 44 to the present level of percentile 52. Nevertheless, the mean score was three percentile points beneath the required attainment level of percentile 55 (Table 19:88).

Objective four indicated a mathematics mean score of percentile 55 for high risk students. The mathematics mean score did rise by two percentile points from the 1984-1985 level of percentile 44 to the current level of percentile 46. Yet, the mean score was nine percentile points below the designated success mark of percentile 55 (Table 19:88).

The principal considered the increased achievement in all three areas to be indicative of project success. The high risk kindergartners at Stout Elementary had improved academic achievement as a result of project strategies. It should be noted that the principal believes the mean percentile scores would have met specified success levels

if the CTBS had been administered after summer school.

Table 19

1985-1986 Measurement of Success on the CTBS

	Reading	Language	Math
1984/85 High Risk Mean Percentile	39	44	44
1985/86 High Risk Mean Percentile	49	52	46
Percentile Points Increased/Decreased	+10	+08	+02
Required Level for Objective Success	50	55	55
Percentile Points Above/Below Success	-01	-03	-09

High Risk Kindergartner Attendance: Objective Five

During the 1985-1986 school year, the average daily absence rate of all kindergarten students was 10.07 days. During the same period, the average daily absence rate of high risk kindergartners was 13.37 days. The quotient of dividing the rate of high risk kindergartners by the rate of all kindergartners was 1.33 points. The average daily absence rate of the Earlybirds was 33 percent above the mean absence rate of all kindergartners.

Objective five specified that the high risk mean rate would not be more than 15 percent above the mean rate for all kindergartners. The attendance of high risk kindergartners was not improved by project strategy. The difference in the average daily absence rate increased from the rate of the previous year. The 1984-1985 high risk kindergartners had an average daily absence rate that was 29 percent above the mean absence rate of all kindergartners. The 1985-1986 difference in absence rates increased by four percentage points over the 1984-1985 rate (Table 20:89).

Table 20

1984-1986 Kindergarten Average Daily Absence Rate

	1894-1985	1985-1986
Mean Daily Absence Rate of All Students	6.8 days	10.1 days
Mean Daily Absence Rate of High Risk	8.8 days	13.4 days
High Risk Percent Above Rate of All Students	29%	33%
Percentage Change in Rates		+ 4%

The project strategy of telephone checks for absent high risk students was not effective in improving attendance. The strategy was limited to contacting the parents of absent students; the contact was to convince the parents that the school cared about attendance. The school secretary or school principal tactfully verified the student's absence and noted concern about the student's lack of instruction during the absence. As previously noted (Chapter 5:48), two factors had a detrimental effect on the telephone absence check program. First, excused absences only required that the parent say the student was sick. Second, kindergarten is not mandatory in Indiana. It should be noted that the principal believes improving attendance of high risk students would require a more comprehensive program than telephone checks.

Analysis of Objective Results

The project resulted in three areas of measurable change. The areas were an increase in the kindergarten success of high risk students, an increase in academic achievement of high risk students as calculated by the CTBS, and a lack of increase in the attendance of high risk students. The data that documented the change, or lack of change, in each area has been presented. Equally important to the presentation of data was understanding why these changes happened. The principal analyzed the specific

circumstances leading to the change in each area.

Increased Success in Gaining First Grade Readiness and in Kindergarten Academic Achievement: Why It Happened

Improvement in the areas of gaining first grade readiness (75 percent success) and of increasing CTBS scores was documented. It should be noted that the principal believed two factors of the project produced the improvement. First, the amount of instruction time provided the Earlybirds increased. Second, the instruction for high risk students was dispensed in a small group setting.

The Earlybird tutoring provided from November, 1985 to May, 1986 increased the amount of instruction for high risk kindergartners. The students received help to complete classroom assignments and practice to learn readiness skills. It was especially important that the help and the practice was given in a one-to-one or one-to-two setting. Adult and student tutors were faithful in completing their tutoring assignments. It should be noted that the tutors felt ownership of Project Earlybird; this felling of ownership resulted in each tutor working hard to insure that "their" high risk kindergartner achieved success.

Summer school instruction increased the amount of instruction for high risk kindergartners. The students received help from a professional kindergarten teacher

during the summer session. This instruction was also presented to a small group. Ten kindergartners participate in the summer session with one licensed teacher. The ten-to-one ratio was a vast improvement over the regular year ratio of 25 students to one teacher.

The summer instruction occurred when the high risk students were older. Consequently, the high risk students were more developmentally ready for kindergarten instruction. This instruction late in the kindergarten year directly attacked the identified probable cause of high risk kindergartners being young at school entry (Chapter 2:28).

Improving Attendance: Why There Was No Increase

A decrease on the difference between the mean daily absence rate of all kindergartners and of high risk kindergartners was not produced by project strategy. The telephone checks of absent students was not able to produce improved attendance in high risk kindergartners. Since kindergarten was not mandatory and because excused absences were easy to obtain, a more comprehensive attack on poor attendance was needed.

A strategy that combined telephone checks with student motivation might have been more successful. If the school had conducted an attendance contest for kindergarten students; hopefully, the high risk kindergartner would have

wanted to attend school on a more regular basis. This might have resulted in the student asking the parent to go to school, at the same time that the school was encouraging the parent to bring the child to school. It should be noted that any tactics to improve kindergarten attendance will be limited by lack of state mandate for kindergarten and by the ease of obtaining an excused absence.

Improvement in Attitudes and Self-Concept: A Side Effect

As the principal supervised project implementation, changes in the attitude and in the self-concept of the people involved in Project Earlybird were noted. Formal assessment of the changes was not made. Rather, the principal informally noted the conversations and the actions of the teachers, of the tutors, and of the Earlybirds. The informal evidence suggested that students, tutors, and teachers felt good about themselves and their work in Project Earlybird.

The kindergarten teachers expressed a greater feeling of professionalism. The teachers were directly involved with identification and with remediation of high risk kindergartners. The teachers told the principal that Project Earlybird provided a way to help students that was never before available. One teacher reported that

> when I knew a student would not succeed in kindergarten, there was no set way of changing his destiny. With the tutoring project, I

had hope that we could help him make it to first grade.

The teachers reported that their work load increased as a result of supervising the tutoring. Nevertheless, each kindergarten teacher indicated that the extra work was time well spent. It should be noted that the teachers viewed the additional work as a direct benefit to students.

The Earlybirds enjoyed the tutoring sessions and the summer school class. Many Earlybirds told the principal that working with their tutor was fun. Kindergartners assigned to adults and to sixth grade students expressed the same feeling that tutoring was entertaining. The outlook that learning was fun was important to project success. The principal found no informal evidence that the Earlybirds developed too much dependency on the tutors. In fact, the kindergarten teachers reported that as a result of tutoring the Earlybirds improved their independent work skills.

The principal taught summer school to sixth grade students in a room across the hall from the kindergarten summer school class. The principal noted that kindergartners enjoyed the variety of "hands on" work that was completed in summer school. The kindergarten summer teacher maintained a high level of student enthusiasm. Because the students enjoyed the summer instruction, attendance was above the 98 percent level.

The tutors also maintained a positive attitude about the project. Furthermore, the self-concept and the self-confidence of the tutors increased as the project unfolded. At the close of the project, all adult tutors indicated a desire to tutor during the next school year. The sixth grade tutors included positive comments on the end of year questionnaire (Appendix K:000). Comments included: "I felt good about helping kids"; "I liked tutoring, it gives you a chance to help someone who needs it"; "I really enjoyed working with kids younger than me"; and "I loved tutoring". The sixth grade teachers reported that the student tutors exhibited greater confidence in sixth grade school work. The teachers also disclosed that the peer interaction of the tutors improved. It should be noted that the teachers believed discipline problems decreased because the tutors did not want to be suspended from the tutoring program.

The principal believed that Project Earlybird improved the public relations of the school. The adult tutors spoke positively about the program and the school to their acquaintances. The student tutors spoke positively about the program and the school to their parents and to their friends. The staff members talked about the success of the project whenever the opportunity arose. The belief that Stout Elementary cared about high risk children and that Stout Elementary had a program to help high risk children spread throughout much of the community.

The side effects of improved attitude about school and of improved self-concept among all participants were important. It should be noted that the principal considered attainment of the side effects equally important to the documented increase in kindergarten success. Continuation of positive attitude and of positive self-concept was considered as justification for continuing the project.

The Costs of Project Earlybird

Monetary, Non-monetary, and opportunity costs of Project Earlybird were evaluated. The monetary costs were telephone log book, computer software, reinforcement games and materials for the Earlybird room, and tutor recognition items. The portion of the summer school teacher's salary that was paid by local funds was also a monetary cost. The total monetary cost of Project Earlybird was $730.90 (Table 21:97).

Non-Monetary costs were the time and the energy of the tutors, as well as the use of one computer. The adults and students who provided volunteer tutoring paid for Project Earlybird with their efforts. Matching the volunteer tutoring with paid instructors could have resulted in a monetary cost of thousands of dollars. The volunteer service was very cost effective.

Table 21

Monetary Costs of Project Earlybird

Item	Monetary Cost
Telephone Log Book	$ 6.95
Computer Software	
Muppet Learning Keys	$ 69.95
Getting Ready to Read and Add	$ 59.00
Hands On Materials/Games	$ 30.00
Tutor Recognition	
Softdrinks	$ 20.00
Flowers/Plants	$ 60.00
"Tea" Refreshments	$ 20.00
Certificates	$ 15.00
Summer Teacher Salary	
Local portion (30%)	$ 450.00
Total Cost	$ 730.90

The opportunity costs were the use of coatroom as the Earlybird Room, as well as the time of the teachers and of the principal. During the 1985-1986 school year, the kindergarten coatroom could not be used as a coatroom. The kindergartners stored their coats on a portable rack in the kindergarten classroom. While this arrangement was somewhat inconvenient, the benefit of having a pleasant, decorated tutoring room far out weighed the annoyance of

not having a coatroom. The kindergarten teachers spent time during their professional work day preparing materials and directions for the tutors. This time could have been spent on direct instruction of high risk kindergartners. It should be noted that the teachers and the principal believe the more productive use of the time was preparing for tutoring. The teachers would not have been able to accommodate all of the high risk students during the amount of time spent for tutor preparation. The principal devoted time to recruitment of tutors, to training of tutors, to scheduling of tutors, to conducting staff meetings, to preparing for summer school, and to evaluating project success. It should be noted that the principal's time was used for instructional leadership. Since providing instructional leadership is the primary goal of school administration, the time spent by the principal on Project Earlybird was well worth the cost.

Chapter Seven

Maintaining Project Earlybird

Maintaining Project Earlybird

Factors considered in determination of whether Project Earlybird should be continued were success of high risk kindergartners to gain first grade readiness, achievement of high risk kindergartner on the CTBS, and the attendance of the high risk kindergartners. Since success was attained in two of the areas, the factors indicated Project Earlybird should be continued with modifications. The principal instituted Project Earlybird as a permanent alteration of the school program in October, 1986.

The program to help high risk kindergartners was adopted for permanent use with some changes. The principal believed that the strategy of telephone checks for absent high risk kindergartners should be dropped from Project Earlybird. The problem of poor attendance among high risk students required a more comprehensive approach than telephone checks. It should be noted that the principal planned a school-wide project to improve attendance. The program was implemented during the 1986-1987 school year, and was included as a part of an overall program to improve school climate (Losey, 1986).

The volunteer tutoring strategy was continued. Due to the success of the sixth grade tutors, adult tutors were not recruited for 1986-1987. Five of the six adult tutors from 1985-1986 worked with Project Earlybird during the next school year. Sixteen sixth grade tutors completed the 1986-1987 tutor corp. The content of the tutoring sessions continued to stress completing work not finished in kindergarten class and reinforcing readiness skills with computer assisted instruction.

The summer school program developed in the project was permanently adopted without change. It should be noted that continuation of the program will be dependent upon the continuation of state funding for the teacher's salary. The Indiana State Superintendent of Schools has publicly supported continuing the funding for summer school.

During the 1985-1986 school year, the monetary cost of Project Earlybird was acceptable (Table 21:97). During the next school year, the monetary cost will decrease. The computer software will already be available. The reinforcement materials used by the tutors in Earlybird Room will already be purchased. While the monetary cost in 1985-1986 was $ 730.90; during 1986-1987, the monetary cost of Project Earlybird is projected to be $571.00. The non-monetary costs and opportunity cost that were acceptable during the first year of the project will continue to be acceptable. The costs of Project Earlybird were worth the

results attained; the evaluation of costs indicated the project should be continued.

Follow-up in West Clark Schools

A record of Project Earlybird was forwarded to the administrators of West Clark Community Schools. The principal discussed the progress of the project with the administrators throughout the implementation phase. Since the project has been permanently established at Stout Elementary, the principal will be available to assist other administrators in the dissemination of the project.

It is likely that the practicum procedures can be used by the other five West Clark elementary schools. Adaptation in the program may be necessary to meet local conditions. The principals of these five schools will be invited to observe the project at Stout Elementary. Their observations will include attending a tutoring session.

Another point of local dissemination is the school administrator's professional association. Elementary and middle school administrators from five southern Indiana counties are included in the Ohio River Valley Elementary and Middle School Principal Association (ORVEMSPA). A report on the practicum project will be available at ORVEMSPA professional meetings.

Conclusion

The decision to continue Project Earlybird was ultimately made based on the benefits to high risk children. Due to project execution, the high risk kindergarten students at Stout Elementary School received more effective instruction; success in gaining first grade readiness skills was improved. Furthermore, achievement of high risk kindergartners in reading, in language, and in mathematics increased as a result of the project.

The principal believes that the side effects were noteworthy. Improved attitude and improved self-concept by the Earlybirds and by the sixth grade tutors were critically important. The professionalism of the kindergarten teachers increased during the project. It should also be noted that the public relations of the school improved as project participants spoke favorably about Project Earlybird. In summary, the improved learning opportunity and the positive side effects were reasons to continue the help for high risk students at Stout Elementary, Project Earlybird.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: STOUT ELEMENTARY PRESCHOOL SCREENING TEST

WEST CLARK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS KINDERGARTEN READINESS CHECKLIST

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

CHILD'S NAME _____ _____ DATE _____
last *first*

ASK THE CHILD TO DO THE FOLLOWING:
ARE THE TASKS COMPLETED?

		YES	NO
1.	Say after me 6-1-7-4?	1. ____	____
2.	Repeat: The boy ran all the way home from the store.	2. ____	____
3.	Able to point "up" and "down".	3. ____	____
4.	Tell the meaning of simple words like *apple, shoe, water, horse?* (3 or 4 = yes)	4. ____	____
5.	Count 4 objects?	5. ____	____
6.	Supply the last word to all of the following statements? (2 or 3 = yes) *Mother is a woman; Father is a _____. A fire is hot; An ice cube is _____. A plane goes fast; A turtle goes _____.*	6. ____	____
7.	Put together a simple puzzle.	7. ____	____
8.	Tell what parts a missing in a stick picture of a person with a leg and an arm left out?	8. ____	____
9.	Draw or copy a square?	9. ____	____
10.	Name correctly these drawings?	10. ____	____
11.	The names of 3 or 4 colors that you point out?	11. ____	____

ASK THE CHILD

12.	How many ears do you have?	12. ____	____
13.	How many feet does a dog have?	13. ____	____
14.	Which goes faster-a motorcycle or bicycle?	14. ____	____
15.	What or where does meat come from?	15. ____	____
16.	What are cars made of?	16. ____	____
17.	What is a key for?	17. ____	____
18.	What are your eyes used for?	18. ____	____
19.	What are your ears used for?	19. ____	____
20.	Tell in what way a sweater, shoe and hat are the same?	20. ____	____

Appendix A (Continued)

WEST CLARK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION READINESS CHECKLIST

CHILD'S NAME _____ _____ DATE _____
last *first*

SPEECH SCREEN

(comments) _____ 1 2 3 4

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

		YES	NO
1.	Is child 5 yrs. 6 mos. or older when he/she begins kindergarten? *(Born before March, 1980)*	1. ____	____
	Is child at or better than norms of height and weight?		
	Boys / Girls		
2.	Wt: 40 lbs / Wt: 37 lbs. / Wt. ____	2. ____	____
3.	Ht: 43 ins. / Ht: 42 in. / Ht. ____	3. ____	____

ASK THE CHILD TO DO THE FOLLOWING:
ARE THE TASKS COMPLETED?

4.	Walk a straight line - forward?	4. ____	____
5.	Walk a straight line - backward?	5. ____	____
6.	Stand on one foot for five to ten seconds?	6. ____	____
7.	Tell lefthand from the right?	7. ____	____
8.	Catch a ball?	8. ____	____
9.	Throw a ball?	9. ____	____

- - - -

Appendix A (Continued)

WEST CLARK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - KINDERGARTEN READINESS CHECKLIST

PARENT QUESTIONS *Who is answering these questions?* ___ *father* ___ *mother* ___ *other (specify)* _____

CHILD'S NAME _____ _____ _____
last *first*

Activities Related to Growth "*Can your child ...*"		YES	NO
1. Pay attention to a short story when it is read and answer simple questions about it?	1	___	___
2. Draw and color - beyond a simple scribble?	2	___	___
3. Tie a knot?	3	___	___
4. Zip or button up a coat?	4	___	___
5. Alternate feet walking down a stairs?	5	___	___
6. Fasten button he/she can see?	6	___	___
7. Tell whole name?	7	___	___
Practical Skills *"Can your child ..."*			
8. Hold and use scissors correctly?	8	___	___
9. Take care of toilet needs alone?	9	___	___
10. Remember instructions and carry out 2 or 3 simple tasks after being told once?	10	___	___
11. Be away from you 2-3 hrs without being upset?	11	___	___
12. Cross a road or street safely?	12	___	___
Attitude and Interest (social development)			
13. Do you have books, magazines and newspapers in your home that your child looks at?	13	___	___
14. Is your child unafraid of going to school?	14	___	___
15. Does your child often ask when he/she will go to school?	15	___	___
16. Does your child pretend to read?	16	___	___
17. Have you attempted to create in your child the idea of looking forward to school rather than fear of school?	17	___	___

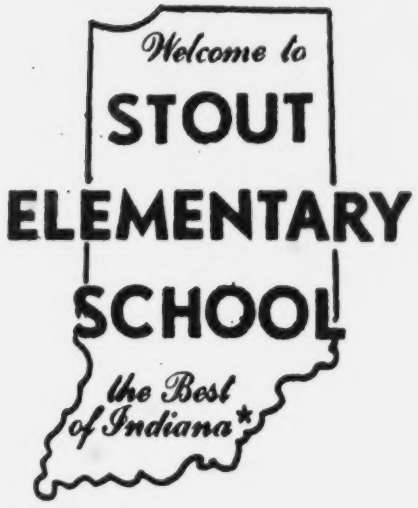
Is there any information that will help us know your child better?

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B: LETTER TO PARENTS AT PRESCHOOL SCREENING



April 10, 1985

Dear Parents,

Thank your for participating in the Kindergarten Registration Screening Activities. The question of school readiness is an important issue. Many children start school before they are actually ready for such any experience. We feel the professional use of the screening tasks will help your child's first experience in education.

Each of the 46 items in the screening were based on data from child growth and development studies. The screening process has been used for four years at Stout Elementary. We have found it very reliable in predicting readiness for kindergarten. We are able to reassure parents whose children are ready for the challenge of school. We are also able to advise parents whose children may simply need more time to grow. A slight delay in starting school may make a great difference in readiness or developmental levels. When a child is not ready for school activities most often the solution is time; giving the child time to grow older.

If the school staff can be of help to you or your child in any way, please call Stout Elementary at 246-9561.

David E. Losey, Principal

office of the principal

Appendix C: Action Plans

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #1 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Absent Students

Goal Statement: Reduce the absence rate of high risk kindergarten student

Objective: To design, implement, and evaluate a program of telephone checks on absent high risk kindergarten students

HOW:
1. Kindergarten teachers forward list of absent students to office at start of class
2. Secretary telephones all high risk students on the absence list
3. Secretary records summary of phone call in permanent log book; record is to include reason for absence, expected date of return, and any arrangements to obtain make-up work
4. Copies of phone record are to be sent to the principal and teachers

WHEN:
Begin - November 1985
Stop - May 1986

WHO

Direct Acountability: Principal

Delegated Accountability: School Secretary

Assistance: Kindergarten Teachers

WHERE:
Kindergarten classroom
School Office

COST: $5.00 - Telephone Log Book

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF
HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #2 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Volunteer Tutors - "Project Earlybird"

Goal Statement: Increase instructional time and one-to-one instruction for high risk kindergarten students

Objective: To recruit select 13 volunteer tutors

HOW:
1. Newsletter explaining Project Earlybird and asking for vounteers sent to all school parents (grades K-6)
2. Verbal request for volunteer made at first and second grade music/art fair (expected attendance 500-600 adults)
3. Grade six teachers recommend students capable of completing the tutor function
4. Principal and kindergarten teachers select tutors from volunteers

WHEN: November 1985

WHO

Direct Acountability: Principal

Delegated Accountability:

Assistance:
Kindergarten Teachers
School Secretary
Grade Six Teachers

WHERE:
School office
Music/Art Fair

COST: No additional cost

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF
HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #3 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Volunteer Tutors - "Project Earlybird"

Goal Statement: Increase instructional time and one-to-one instruction for high risk kindergarten students

Objective: To train/assign 13 volunteer tutors

HOW:

1. Conduct training meeting for tutors
2. Training to include:
   a. establishing rapport with students
   b. how to give guidance in completing developmental tasks
   c. student confidentiality
3. Assign two students to each volunteer, match tutor's time available with student's non-instructional time

WHEN: November - December 1985

WHO

Direct Acountability: Principal

Delegated Accountability:

Assistance: Kindergarten Teachers

WHERE: School Library
Kindergarten tutoring stations

COST: No additional cost

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF
HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #4 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Volunteer Tutors - "Project Earlybird"

Goal Statement: Increase instructional time and one-to-one instruction for high risk kindergarten students

Objective: To implement/supervise 13 volunteer tutors

HOW:
1. Instructional materials and assignments provided for each tutor by teacher
2. Tutor completes assignment with two students
3. Teacher monitors student achievement and assigns next material to be covered
4. Tutor reports student observations to teacher
5. Teachers report progress to parents on a regular basis and to the principal at weekly staff meetings

WHEN: Begin - December 1985
Stop - May 1986

WHO
Direct Acountability: Kindergarten Teachers

Delegated Accountability: Volunteer Tutors

Assistance: Principal

WHERE: Kindergarten Tutoring Stations

COST: No additional cost

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF
HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #5 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Volunteer Tutors - "Project Earlybird"

Goal Statement: Increase instructional time and one-to-one instruction for high risk kindergarten students

Objective: To evaluate performance of tutors

HOW:
1. Kindergarten teachers shall monitor the performance of tutors
2. Teachers will evaluate the performance and behavior of tutors
3. Teachers will report evaluations to the principal at weekly staff meetings

WHEN:
Begin - December 1985
Stop - May 1986

WHO

Direct Acountability: Principal

Delegated Accountability: Kindergarten Teachers

Assistance:

WHERE:
Kindergarten Tutor Stations
Office

COST: No additional cost

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF
HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #6 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Evaluation of Kindergarten Success

Goal Statement: Measure the achievement of high risk kindergartners in the areas of Reading, Language, and Mathematics

Objective: To administer the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills

HOW: 1. Use CTBS materials as provide by the local school corporation with each student

WHEN: April 1985

WHO

Direct Acountability: Assistant Superintendent

Delegated Accountability: Principal

Assistance: Kindergarten Teachers

WHERE: Kindergarten classrooms

COST: No additional cost

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF
HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #7 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Summer School Instruction

Goal Statement: Increase length of instructional year and provide instruction at an older age for high risk kindergarten students

Objective: To design summer instruction program

HOW:
1. Kindergarten teachers identify instruction areas to be covered in summer
2. Kindergarten teacher and principal develop curriculum guide for use by summer school teacher
3. Principal secures instructional materials needed for summer school

WHEN: April - May 1985

WHO

Direct Acountability: Principal

Delegated Accountability: Kindergarten Teachers

Assistance:

WHERE: Kindergarten classrooms
Office

COST: No additional cost

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF
HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #8 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Summer School Instruction

Goal Statement: Increase length of instructional year and provide instruction at an older age for high risk kindergarten students

Objective: To implement summer instruction program

HOW:
1. Kindergarten teachers identify high risk students needing summer instruction
2. Parents of identified students notified concerning the summer program
3. Students attending summer program enrolled
4. Principal recommends teacher for summer program to the Superintendent
5. Kindergarten teachers and principal review summer curriculum with summer teacher
6. Summer teacher implements instruction
7. Summer teacher evaluates student progress and reports to parents and principal; recommend retention in kindergarten or placement in grade one

WHEN: May - July 1986

WHO
Direct Acountability: Principal
Delegated Accountability: Summer School Teacher
Assistance: Kindergarten Teachers

WHERE: Kindergarten Classrooms
Office

COST: $1,000 (state funding possible)

Appendix C (Continued)

IMPROVING THE FIRST GRADE READINESS SKILLS OF HIGH RISK KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

ACTION PLAN #9 1985-1986

Area of Concern: Evaluation of Kindergarten Success

Goal Statement: Measure the success of high risk kindergartners to achieve first grade readiness

Objective: To administer the First Grade Readiness Test (FGRT)

HOW: 1. Use the FGRT materials provided by the school with each first grade student (1984-1985 Kindergartners) as posttest for the kindergarten program

WHEN: September - October 1986

WHO

Direct Acountability: Principal

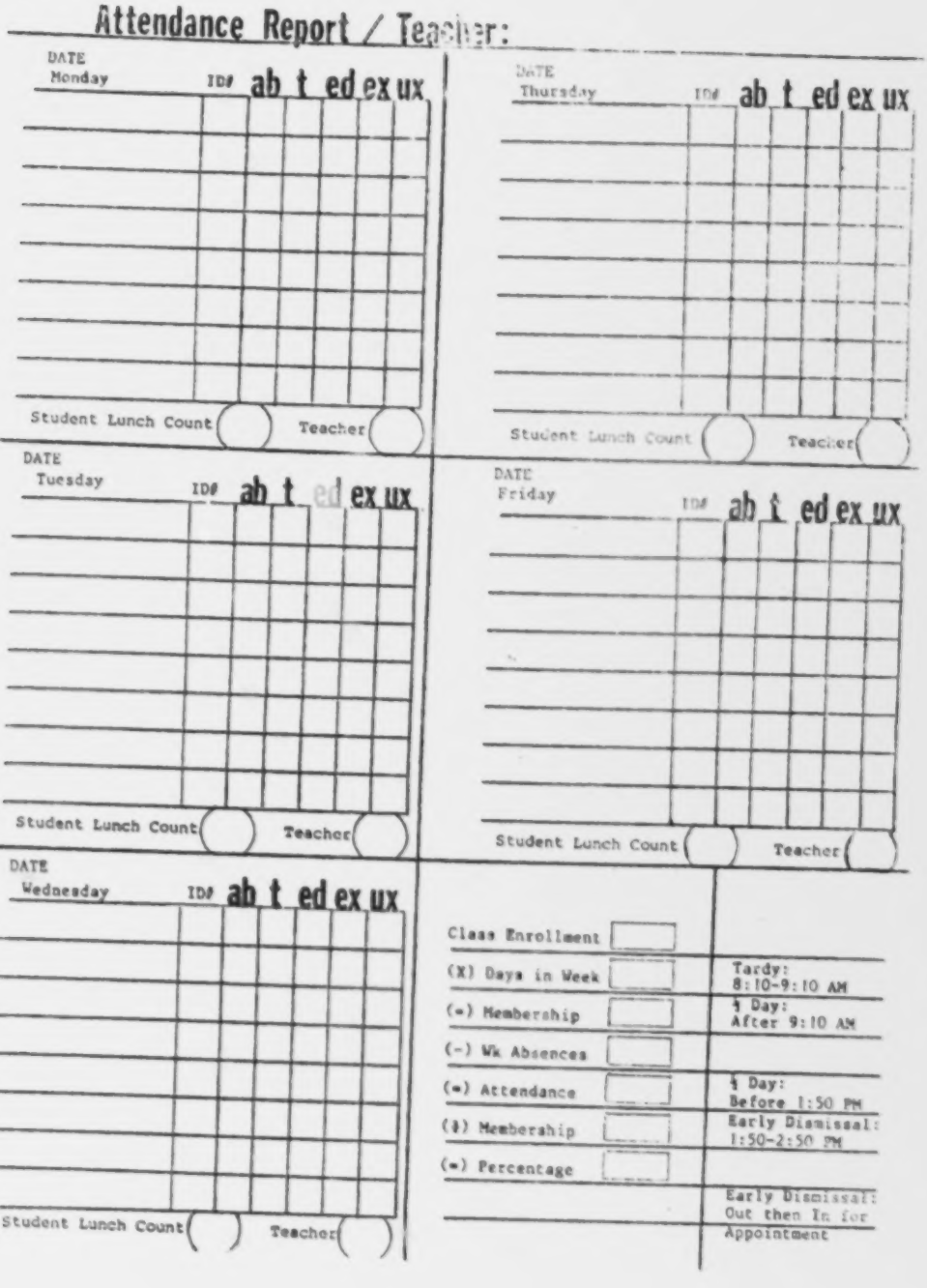
Delegated Accountability: Grade One Teachers

Assistance: Secretary

WHERE: Grade one classrooms

COST: No additional cost

Appendix D: Weekly Attendance Record Form



TELEPHONE MESSAGE

№ 000476

DATE CALL RECEIVED | TIME

WHO CALLED

FIRM

CITY, STATE

PHONE | AREA CODE

☐ RETURN CALL, DATE, TIME

☐ WILL CALL AGAIN, DATE, TIME

CALL TAKEN BY

DAVID E. LOSEY
PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FOR . . . .

MESSAGE

TELEPHONE MESSAGE

№ 000477

DATE CALL RECEIVED | TIME

WHO CALLED

FIRM

CITY, STATE

PHONE | AREA CODE

☐ RETURN CALL, DATE, TIME

☐ WILL CALL AGAIN, DATE, TIME

CALL TAKEN BY

DAVID E. LOSEY
PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FOR . . . .

MESSAGE

Appendix F: Good Apple Report Newsletter 10/23/85

VOL. 6 NO. 3
OCT. 23, 1985

STOUT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

THE GOOD APPLE REPORT

THINKING OF WAYS YOU CAN HELP AT SCHOOL?

WANT ADS

Needed 1 Used Refrigerator to Make Ice for Injuries & to Cool Things

A refrigerator donated to Stout would be tax deductible (246-9561)

WHY NOT BE A VOLUNTEER TUTOR FOR KINDERGARTEN

Parents or grandparents are needed to help kindergarten students master basic skills. You would work with one student on lessons prepared by the teacher. You would be involved about 30 min. each week.

CATCH THE SPITFIRE SPIRIT WITH A SCHOOL BAG -

Orange & White Spitfire Backpacks and Gym Bags are the ticket to school spirit. Regularly $10.95 get one now for $7.00 !! in our preseason sale.

SO BE A GOOD BUNNY AND HOP TO A PHONE OR NOTEPAD

CALL 246-9561 OR SEND A NOTE TO SCHOOL IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION ON HOW YOU CAN HELP AS A TUTOR FOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS. THANKS !!!

DON'T FORGET!!!!!

First and Second Grade Music Program- October 29, 1985 - 7:00 p.m. Silver Creek Jr High School

No School - October 31, November 1
Lunch Tickets next week - 3 days $2.55
Picture Retakes - Thurs. Oct. 24, 1985

Appendix G: Adult Tutor Thank-you Note

REMOVE THIS COPY AND CARBON BEFORE MAILING

FROM David E. Losey, Principal
Stout Elementary School
503 N. Indiana Ave.
Sellersburg, In 47172

MAILING ENVELOPE INCLUDED!

One writing prepares your message and the mailing envelope.

This is your file copy.

SUBJECT Kindergarten tutoring ---"Project Earlybird"

MESSAGE Mrs. A

Thank you for volunteering to help as a kindergarten tutor. The teachers and I are gathering materials and finishing plans for the program. We expect to meet with all tutors in late Nov or early December. I am convinced "project early-bird" will truly benefit kdg students in need of help; thanks for being a part of the program.

SIGNED [signature] DATE 11/15/85

REPLY

SIGNED DATE

TO Mrs. Judy A.
642 Mulberry Lane
Sellersburg, In ZIP 47172

TOPS FORM 3304 LITHO IN U.S.A. AIM ELEVATT

Appendix H: Earlybird Tutoring Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:20-8:40		Mrs Abbott Ronnie D Andy D	Mrs Harris Chris L Bryan S	Mrs Abbott Ronnie D Andy D	Mrs Harris Chris L Bryan S
8:50-9:10		Mrs Abbott Kelly F Jenny R		Mrs Abbott Kelly F Jenny R	
9:30-9:50		Mrs Ahlbrand Dusty M Andrew S		Mrs Ahlbrand Dusty M Andrew S	
10:00-10:20	Katie Boggs Dustin H Logan W Heather Kelly	Rachel Castile Danielle B. Adrienna W. Toni Shepherd	Heather Kelly Logan W Dustin H Katie Boggs	Rachel Castile Danielle B. Adrienna W. Toni Shepherd	
12:00-12:20	Mrs Just Shannon S Lisa R	Mrs Hester Mark S Nicholas H	Mrs Just Shannon S Lisa R	Mrs Hester Mark S Nicholas H	Mrs Bottorff Amanda E James W
12:00-12:20 Hallway		Mrs Bottorff Amanda E James W			
12:45-1:05	Chris Martin Kenneth F Bryan P Chad Slaughter	Amanda Ahlbrand Jeremiah G Kathleen D Angie Briner	Chris Martin Kenneth F Bryan P Chad Slaughter	Amanda Ahlbrand Jeremiah G Kathleen D Angie Briner	Jackie Walton Steven B Sarah Stader Christina Vest
12:45-1:05 Hallway			Jackie Walton Steven B Sarah S Christina Vest		
1:00-1:30		Mrs Fischer Bryan L Thomas K		Mrs Fischer Bryan L Thomas K	

PROJECT: EARLYBIRD *** KINDERGARTEN TUTORING SCHEDULE ***

Appendix I: Earlybird Student Progress Report

PROJECT: EARLYBIRD ### WEEK FOUR EVALUATION

Student Name: Adrienne W Date: Jan 29, 1986

Teacher: Bailey Session: AM

Please consider student work, your observations, and information provided by the tutor in answering these questions:

1. What is the current status of the child's progress in the kindergarten program (include strengths and weaknesses)?

Adrienne is doing very well, individual help has graced her confidence in herself.

2. Has the tutoring provided by Project Earlybird helped the child (please include examples)? Yes, it has been a positive experience, she probably won't require a tutor the entire semester.

3. Tutor Name: Rachel Castile Adult/Student (circle)

4. Has the tutor fulfilled the responsibilities of the program and met your expectations? Yes, Rachel has been a very dedicated tutor, she takes her responsibility seriously.

5. Do you recommend changes in the child's Earlybird Program?

6. Are there any additional comments? Hopefully we can add students or take a students on an individual basis for a few sessions to work on a needed skill.

Teacher Signature: M. L. Bailey

Appendix J: Indiana University Southeast Letter

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SOUTHEAST

4201 Grant Line Road
New Albany, Indiana 47150
(812) 945-2731

April 3, 1986

Mr. David Losey, Principal
Stout Elementary School
Sellersburg, IN

Dear Mr. Losey:

On behalf of my entire class of undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in E338 Early Childhood Educator and E524 Workshop in Early Childhood Education, I want to thank you for presenting your paper "Improving the First Grade Readiness Skills of High Risk Kindergarten Students" on March 5, 1986. Your presentation and handouts were excellent. My students learned so much about kindergarten curriculum, help for high risk kindergartners, program objectives, improving first grade readiness skills, and implementation strategy.

As a kindergarten instructor at IUS, I applaud your concern and dedication to kindergarten education. I found your project and paper very innovative, creative, and paramount to the improvement of quality kindergarten education.

I wish you much success with the implementation of your program. Once again, thank you so very much for your time, effort, and valuable information.

Sincerely,

Susan Kern

Susan Kern
Adjunct Lecturer in Education

Appendix K: Tutor Questionnaire

STOUT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
West Clark Community Schools
503 NORTH INDIANA AVE
SELLERSBURG, INDIANA 47172
PHONE 246-9561

EARLYBIRD TUTORS

1. Describe what you did as a tutor:

2. What did you like the best and the least about being a tutor:

3. Is there anything that should be changed in the tutor program for next year:

4. How did you feel about being a tutor:

5. Any other comments:

Appendix L: Summer School Announcement

ELEMENTARY
SUMMER
SCHOOL
Dear Parents,
West Clark Community Schools would like to inform you that we will be offering Summer School programs for elementary students. Listed to the right are brief descriptions of the planned programs.
The classes will begin June 5th and conclude July 2nd. There will be four tentative sites, pending enrollment, one at Borden, one at Henryville, one at Speedway, and one in the Sellersburg area. Again this year enrollment is open to all recommended West Clark Students to attend the site of their choice. Transportation will be the parents' responsibility. There will not be a tuition fee.
Later this spring, additional information and enrollment forms for Summer School will be sent home. Immediate questions can be answered by your school principal.
WEST CLARK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Each class will be two (2) hours in length and your child may attend those classes recommended by the school.
ENRICHMENT -- The program will include exploration of special academic areas such as: Science, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Computer Assisted Instruction, and Computer Applications.
REMEDIAL MATH -- The teacher will assess the child's current level and reteach needed skills, stressing basic math facts.
REMEDIAL LANGUAGE ARTS (READING) -- The teacher will assess the child's current level and reteach needed skills, stressing vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing composition.
JUNE 5TH TO
JULY 2, 1986

Appendix M: Summer School Letter

STOUT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
West Clark Community Schools
500 NORTH INDIANA AVE.
SELLERSBURG, INDIANA 47172
PHONE 246-9561

PROJECT: EARLYBIRD

SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

To the Parent of _____

Stout Elementary (West Clark Community Schools) will be offering a remedial summer school program in language arts for kindergarten students. The program will begin June 5th and end July 2nd. There will not be any transportation offered and it will be the responsibility of the parents to insure full attendance during the entire 20 day term. Time will be 10:00 - 12:00 p.m.

This program is an excellent opportunity for your child to reinforce letter-sound skills before first grade. The program is offered, tuition free, to all recommended students.

It is my belief that your child could benefit from the extra remedial help this program can offer. I am recommending to you that you make arrangements to enroll your child in the program.

Sincerely,

_____
Kindergarten Teacher

I would like to enroll _____ in summer school language arts program. I will accept responsibility for transportation and insure that my child is in attendance.

I would not like to enroll _____ in summer school.

_____
Parent Signature

* Return this form as soon as possible; classes will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.